4-3 (Rev. 12-14-64)

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

DECODED COPY

☐ AIRGRAM ☐ CABLEGRAM ☒ RADIO ☐ TELETYPE

R-75
URGENT 1-6-65
TO DIRECTOR
FROM NEW ORLEANS 061952

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, JONESBORO LOUISIANA, PERCY LEE BRADFORD, PRESIDENT, ~~RM.~~ RACIAL MATTER

CHARLES JOSEPH FENTON, CORE REPRESENTATIVE AT JONESBORO LOUISIANA ADVISED THAT CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN ORGANIZED IN JACKSON PARISH AT JONESBORO LOUISIANA AND THAT IT HAS FOR ITS PURPOSES MUCH THE SAME AS THOSE OF THE CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY (CORE) BUT THAT CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION IS MORE MILITANT THAN CORE AND THAT IT WOULD BE MORE INCLINED TO USE VIOLENCE IN DEALING WITH ANY VIOLENT OPPOSITION ENCOUNTERED IN CIVIL RIGHTS MATTERS. CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION HAS NIGHT PATROLS IN THE NEGRO SECTIONS OF JONESBORO AND FENTON BELIEVES THAT THESE NIGHT PATROLS ARE ARMED.

~~LHM~~ FOLLOWS.

Letter head MEMO

RECEIVED: 3:57 PM RDR

MCT-21 2466-

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

2 JAN 12 1965

If the intelligence contained in the above message is to be disseminated outside the Bureau, it is suggested that it be s paraphrased in order to protect the Bureau's cryptographic systems.

FD-36 (Rev. 3-22-64)

FBI

Date: 1/6/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority)

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (157-New)

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-New)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE OF JUSTICE,
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA,
PERCY LEE BRADFORD, PRESIDENT
RM

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight (8) copies of LHM re captioned matter.

ENCLOSURE

3 - Bureau (Enc. 8)
2 - New Orleans
EC/med
(5)

REC-8 157-2466-21

1 JAN 12 1965

EX-102

Agency G-2, ONI, OSI, CRD, SS, CAS

Date Forw. JAN 8 1965

How Forw. R-S

By abh-med

Room 828 RB

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gal/ff

Approved _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

JAN 18 1965

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

New Orleans, Louisiana
January 6, 1964

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE OF JUSTICE,
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA,
PERCY LEE BRADFORD, PRESIDENT

Charles Joseph Fenton, representative of Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) at Jonesboro, Louisiana, advised January 5, 1965 that an organization known as Deacons for Defense of Justice, with Percy Lee Bradford, Negro male, age about 44, as president, has been organized at Jonesboro, Louisiana. He stated that this organization was organized to promote Negroes' civil rights and that its purposes were much the same as those of CORE. He stated that whereas CORE is completely non-violent in its methods of dealing with civil rights matters, Deacons for Defense of Justice would be more militant and inclined to use violence in dealing with any violent opposition encountered. He stated that Deacons for Defense of Justice has night patrols in the Negro sections of Jonesboro and he feels that these night patrols are armed.

Rev. Frederick D. Kirkpatrick, member of the Deacons for Defense of Justice, advised this organization was a non-violent Negro movement organized exclusively within Jackson Parish, Louisiana. He stated its purpose was to promote justice for the Negro and followed the same principals as laid down by the CORE except its members would, if attacked, defend themselves by use of force.

He said this organization has two citizens band radios and walkie talkies used to communicate with one another in case violence against the Negro is initiated in Jackson Parish. He said there was between 250 and 300 members within the parish and they

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 Sa/fn

ENCLOSURE 157-2466-2

did not carry arms at any time. He advised the following individuals were leaders of the Deacons for Defense of Justice:

b6
b7C

President	Percy Lee Bradford
Vice President	Henry Amos
Secretary	Frederick D. Kirkpatrick
Finance Secretary	Allen Scherrah
Group Leaders	Earnest Thomas,
	Charles Osetta Jackson,
	Odis Martin,
	Olend Satcher,
	E. L. Patterson

B. APPRO

LA.

Chief Adrian Teevy, Chief of Police, Jonesboro, Louisiana, and Sheriff Newt Loe, Sheriff of Jackson Parish, Jonesboro, advised January 6, 1965 that they were aware of Negro patrols in the Jonesboro area but that no incidents had arisen from those patrols.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

(1-20-61)

Domestic Intelligence Division

INFORMATIVE NOTE

Date 1-6-65

We are disseminating this information to the Civil Rights Division of the Department.

AJD

WCS
BR

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2-16-80. BY SP1 gbl/fr

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
FEB 23 1965

TELETYPE

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

FBI WASH DC

X

FBI WASH DC

157-2466

491

FBI NEW ORLS

8:46 PM CST URGENT 2-23-65 RJS

TO DIRECTOR

FROM NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, PERCY LEE BRADFORD; RM.

ON FEBRUARY TWENTY TWO, LAST, [redacted] b7D

[redacted], LOUISIANA, POLICE DEPARTMENT, CONFIDENTIALLY ADVISED FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING CAPTIONED MATTER:

[redacted] STATED THAT IT WAS LEARNED THAT ON THE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY TWENTY ONE, LAST, SIX CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY, PAREN CORE END PAREN, MEMBERS APPEARED AT BOGALUSA, AT WHICH TIME THEY HELD A MEETING AT THE NEGROES LABOR HALL. THIS MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY SEVERAL BOGALUSA NEGRO LEADERS, NAMELY ROBERT HICKS, ALBERT Z. YOUNG, MC COURY SAMPSON, CHARLES SIMS, ALTON DAVIS, AND ONE OR TWO OTHERS NOT IDENTIFIED. HE IDENTIFIED THE CORE MEMBERS AS REVEREND FREDERICK BL KIRPATRICK, CHARLES FENTON, STEVEN MILLER, WILLIAM YATES, ERNEST THOMAS , AND ANOTHER UNIDENTIFIED NEGRO. b7D

REC-2 157-2466-3

5 MAR 3 1965

END PAGE ONE

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1

67 MAR 9 1965

[redacted] STATED THAT MILLER AND YATES ARE WELL KNOWN TO BOGALUSA AS THEY HAVE BEEN PARTICIPATING RECENTLY IN DESEGREGATION ACTIVITIES, HOWEVER, KIRPATRICK, FENTON, THOMAS, ALONG WITH THE UNIDENTIFIED NEGRO ARE BELIEVED TO COME FROM THE VICINITY OF JONESBORO, LOUISIANA. b7D

[redacted] REPORTED THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WAS TO DISCUSS AN ORGANIZATION NOW BEING PUT TOGETHER IN LOUISIANA KNOWN AS THE DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE. PAREN DDJ END PAREN. THE MAIN SPEAKER OF THE EVENING WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN ERNEST THOMAS WHO DISCUSSED THE FACT THAT MEMBERSHIP IN THE DDJ, PAREN STRICTLY NEGRO END PAREN, WOULD COST TEN DOLLARS INITIATION FEE AND TWO DOLLARS PER MONTH. TEN PERCENT OF THE MONIES OBTAINED FROM THE LOCAL CHAPTERS WOULD BE CHANELLED INTO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE STATE ORGANIZATION WHICH IS NOW BELIEVED TO BE AT JONESBORO, LOUISIANA. b7D

IT WAS EXPLAINED, THE PURPOSE OF THE MONEY WAS TO BUY RADIO EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING WALKY DASH TALKIES, CITIZENS BAND EQUIPMENT, FOR AUTOMOBILES, AS WELL AS AMMUNITION, LITERATURE, AND OTHER EQUIPMENT NOT IDENTIFIED. DISCUSSED IN CONSIDERABLE LENGTH WAS THE PUTTING OF MOBIL CITIZENS BAND RADIOS INTO AUTOMOBILES

OF NEGRO MEMBERS, PRINCIPALLY IN BOGALUSA. IT WAS REPORTED THAT THOMAS WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THE DDJ INTENDED TO ESTABLISH A CODE SYSTEM WHEREBY A STATE WIDE COMMUNICATIONS SET UP COULD BE CREATED, IN ORDER THAT, IF NEGROES IN ONE COMMUNITY HAVE DIFFICULTY, THE

FB

NEGROES COULD IMMEDIATELY CALL ON THE RADIO FOR ASSISTANCE AND GET ASSISTANCE. THOMAS TALKED AT LENGTH ABOUT THE USE AND ADVANTAGES OF WALKIE DASH TALKIES AND EQUIPMENT FOR COMMUNICATION PURPOSES.

THOMAS THEN DISCUSSED A TENDENCY ON THE PART OF NEGROES TO BUY CHEAP WEAPONS LIKE A TWENTY TWO CALIBER. THOMAS POINTED OUT THAT NEGROES SHOULD BUY SUBSTANTIAL WEAPONS INCLUDING A THREE ZERO SIX CALIBER RIFLE. THOMAS SUGGESTED THAT TWELVE OR SIXTEEN GAGE SHOTGUNS WERE GOOD FOR QUOTE CLOSE IN WORK UNQUOTE. THOMAS SAID THAT IF STANDARDIZED GAGES WERE OBTAINED THE NEGROES IN COMMUNITIES COULD BUY SHELLS BY THE CASE. THOMAS SAID THAT NEGROES SHOULD KEEP PLENTY OF AMMUNITION IN THEIR CARS, IN THEIR HOMES, AS THEY NEVER KNEW WHEN THEY WOULD NEED THE AMMUNITION AND THEY WERE TO BE EXPECTED TO BE READY

END PAGE THREE

WHENEVER THEY WERE CALLED UPON.

THOMAS SAID THAT HIS GROUP HAS CONTACTS IN CHICAGO AND HOUSTON FOR AUTOMATIC WEAPONS AND MENTIONED A FIFTY CALIBER AND THIRTY CALIBER MACHINE GUN.

THOMAS STATED, REFERRING TO THE KU KLUX KLAN AND WHITE PEOPLE GENERALLY, THAT IF KKK OR WHITE PEOPLE WANTED VIOLENCE, THAT QUOTE THEY INTENDED TO COMBAT VIOLENCE WITH VIOLENCE; THAT THEY HAD NO INTENTION OF STARTING ANYTHING THEMSELVES BUT WANTED TO BE READY UNQUOTE.

THOMAS DISCUSSED AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING ROVING PATROLS IN THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES SO THAT SHOULD ANY NEGRO BE ARRESTED BY A POLICE OFFICER, THAT THE ROVING PATROL AS WITNESSES TO ANY ARREST, COULD IMMEDIATELY DEFEND THE POSITION OF THE ARRESTED PERSON. THOMAS SAID THAT IF POLICE OFFICERS SEE NEGROES WHO ARE ARMED AS THE POLICE ARE, THE POLICE COULD BE EXPECTED TO PROBABLY BACK AWAY AND NOT AFFECT THE ARREST OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

THOMAS DISCUSSED THE NEED FOR MEMBERS OF THIS GROUP, IF THEY SHOULD JOIN, TO GET TOGETHER WITH THEIR NEGRO LEADERS, THE PREACHERS, SCHOOL TEACHERS, AND OTHER RESPONSIBLE PERSONS, AND

PREACH TO AND EMPHASIZE TO THESE LEADER THAT IF THESE LEADERS DO NOT GO ALONG WITH THIS ACTIVITY THAT THEY WERE NOT FIT IN THE FIRST PLACE. THOMAS POINTED OUT IF THE LOCAL MEMBERS IF THE DDJ WERE NOT SUCCESSFUL IN WORKING ON NEGRO LEADERS IN THE COMMUNITY AND CONVINCING THEM THAT THEY, REFERRING TO CORE, WOULD DO IT FOR THEM.

A FURTHER MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF THE DDJ IS SCHEDULED AT BOGALUSA ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY TWENTY EIGHT, SIXTY FIVE, AND ALL PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS WERE REQUESTED TO BRING MONEY, DUES, AND INITIATION FEES.

[redacted] ADVISED THAT BASED UPON THIS INFORMATION b7D
THE BOGALUSA CITY ADMINISTRATION FELT THAT THE DDJ WOULD NOT BE TOO SUCCESSFUL FROM THE STAND POINT OF MEMBERSHIP AND DUES BUT WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES DISCUSSIONS OF THIS TYPE WOULD HAVE AMONG THE NEGRO POPULATION IN THE BOGALUSA COMMUNITY.

ON THE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY TWENTY TWO, SIXTYFIVE, IT WAS REPORTED THAT ROBERT HICKS, A NEGRO LEADER IN BOGALUSA AND ACTIVE IN CORE WORK SPOKE BEFORE THE BOGALUSA VOTERS LEAGUE AT A

MEETING CALLED TO LEND SUPPORT TO THE BOGALUSA NEGRO COMMUNITIES COOPERATION WITH THE CITY ADMINISTRATION. HICKS DISCUSSED AT GREAT LENGTH THE DDJ INFORMATION AS DISCUSSED THE PREVIOUS EVENING BY ERNEST THOMAS. HICKS POINTED OUT TO THE PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE WHO WERE MOSTLY TEENAGE CHILDREN, THE ADVANTAGES OF ARMING THEMSELVES AND DISCUSSED HAND GRENADES, WALKIE DASH TALKIES, AND EXPLAINED GENERALLY WHAT WAS STATED THE PREVIOUS NIGHT BY ERNEST THOMAS.

HICKS WENT INTO GREAT DETAIL CONCERNING HOW YOUNG NEGROES COULD DEFEND THEMSELVES BY CONVERGING ON POLICE OFFICERS IF THE POLICE WERE TRYING TO ARREST NEGROES AND CAUSE DIFFICULTY AT THE TIME OF THE ARREST AND PREVENT THE NEGRO FROM BEING ARRESTED.

SECRET SERVICE, NEW ORLEANS, AND INTELLIGENCE CORPS GROUP, NEW ORLEANS, ARE BEING ADVISED. LHM FOLLOWS.

END.

~~CORR PAGE TWO LINE THREE WORD EIGHT SHD BE UNIDENTIFIED~~

~~PAGE THREE LINE FIVE OMIT LETTERS~~ FB

~~PAGE THREE LINE NINE WORD SHD BE DISCUSSED~~

~~PAGE FOUR LINE NINETEEN WORD THREE SHD BE JOIN~~

END AND ACK PLS

WA..RPP

FBI WASH DC

TU LRP

FD-36 (Rev. 12-13-56)

FBI

Date: 2/24/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority or Method of Mailing)

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, PERCY LEE BRADFORD
RM LA

Enclosed herewith for the Bureau are eight copies of letterhead memorandum concerning captioned matter, two copies for Houston, and two copies for Chicago. Copies have also been forwarded to ICG and Secret Service, New Orleans.

Source mentioned in letterhead memorandum is [redacted], Louisiana, Police Department. b7D

CHICAGO AT CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Through established sources, informants, and gun outlets, determine whether or not any shipments of guns are being made to the Jonesboro, Bogalusa, or New Orleans area.

HOUSTON DIVISION AT HOUSTON, TEXAS

Cover same lead as set forth for Chicago Division.

ENCLOSURE

3 - Bureau (Enc. 8)
2 - Houston (Enc. 2)
2 - Chicago (Enc. 2)
2 - New Orleans (1 - 157-3290)
(1 - 173-201)

JTS/mrk
(9)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gsl/lfr

1 cc detached by
Klan-Hate Group Unit

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC SER DEPT ISD, CRD
DATE FORW: 3-1-65
HOW FORW: routing slip
BY: EA

E. C. Wick

REC-28 157-24616-4

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

10 MAR 3 1965

66 MAR 9 1965

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

New Orleans, Louisiana
February 24, 1965

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE
AND JUSTICE

On February 22, 1965, a confidential source advised the following information concerning the captioned matter:

Source stated that it was learned that on the night of February 21, 1965, six Congress Of Racial Equality (CORE) members appeared at Bogalusa, at which time they held a meeting at the Negroes Labor Hall. This meeting was attended by several Bogalusa Negro leaders, namely, Robert Hicks, Albert Z. Young, McCloury Sampson, Charles Sims, Alton Davis, and one or two others not identified. He identified the CORE members as Reverend Frederick B. Kirkpatrick, Charles Fenton, Steven Miller, William Yates, Ernest Thomas, and another unidentified Negro. CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY

LA

Source stated that Miller and Yates are well known to Bogalusa as they have been participating recently in desegregation activities; however, Kirkpatrick, Fenton, Thomas, along with the unidentified Negro, are believed to come from the vicinity of Jonesboro, Louisiana.

Source reported the main purpose of the meeting was to discuss an organization now being put together in Louisiana known as the Deacons for Defense and Justice (DDJ). The main speaker of the evening was believed to have been Ernest Thomas who discussed the fact that membership in the DDJ (strictly Negro), would cost $10 initiation fee and $2 per month. Ten per cent of the monies obtained from the local chapters would be chanelled into the headquarters of the state organization which is now believed to be at Jonesboro, Louisiana.

It was explained the purpose of the money was to buy radio equipment, including walkie-talkies, citizens band equipment for automobiles, as well as ammunition, literature, and other equipment not identified. Discussed in considerable length was the putting of mobile citizens band radios into

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gal

ENCLOSURE

157-2466-4

automobiles of Negro members, principally in Bogalusa. It was reported that Thomas went on to explain the DDJ intended to establish a code system whereby a state-wide communications set up could be created in order that, if Negroes in one community have difficulty, the Negroes could immediately call on the radio for assistance and get assistance. Thomas talked at length about the use and advantages of walkie-talkies and equipment for communication purposes.

Thomas then discussed a tendency on the part of Negroes to buy cheap weapons like a .22 caliber. Thomas pointed out that Negroes should buy substantial weapons, including a .306 caliber rifle. Thomas suggested that 12 or 16 gage shotguns were good for "close in work." Thomas said that if standardized gages were obtained, the Negroes in communities could buy shells by the case. Thomas said that Negroes should keep plenty of ammunition in their cars, in their homes, as they never knew when they would need the ammunition, and they were to be expected to be ready whenever they were called upon.

Thomas said that his group has contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons and mentioned a .50 caliber and .30 caliber machine gun.

Thomas stated, referring to the Ku Klux Klan and white people generally, that if the Ku Klux Klan or white people wanted violence, that "they intended to combat violence with violence; that they had no intention of starting anything themselves but wanted to be ready."

Thomas discussed at considerable length the advantages of having roving Negro patrols in the various communities so that should any Negro be arrested by a police officer, that the roving patrol, as witnesses to any arrest, could immediately defend the position of the arrested person. Thomas said that if police officers see Negroes who are armed as the police are, the police could be expected to probably back away and not affect the arrest of the individual.

Thomas discussed the need for members of this group, if they should join, to get together with their Negro leaders, the preachers, school teachers, and other responsible persons, and preach to and emphasize to their leaders that if their

leaders do not go along with this activity, that they were not fit in the first place. Thomas pointed out if the local members of the DDJ were not successful in working on Negro leaders in the community and convincing them that they, referring to CORE, would do it for them.

A further membership meeting of the DDJ is scheduled at Bogalusa on Sunday, February 28, 1965, and all prospective members were requested to bring money, dues, and initiation fees.

Source advised that based upon this information, the Bogalusa City Administration felt that the DDJ would not be too successful from the stand point of membership and dues but were concerned about the difficulties discussions of this type would have among the Negro population in the Bogalusa community.

On the night of February 22, 1965, it was reported that Robert Hicks, a Negro leader in Bogalusa and active in CORE work, spoke before the Bogalusa Voters League at a meeting called to lend support to the Bogalusa Negro Communities Cooperation with the City Administration. Hicks discussed at great length the DDJ information as discussed the previous evening by Ernest Thomas. Hicks pointed out to the people in attendance, who were mostly teenage children, the advantages of arming themselves and discussed hand grenades, walkie-talkies, and explained generally what was stated the previous night by Ernest Thomas.

Hicks went into great detail concerning how young Negroes could defend themselves by converging on police officers if the police were trying to arrest Negroes and cause difficulty at the time of the arrest and prevent the Negro from being arrested.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

1 - Belmont
1 - McGowan
1 - Sullivan

TO : W. C. Sullivan

DATE: 2-26-65

FROM : F. J. Baumgardner

1 - Baumgardner
1 - Trainor
1 - Gray
1 - Martin
1 - Phillips

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
INFORMATION CONCERNING
(INTERNAL SECURITY)

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
McGrath
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Evans
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

This is an informative memorandum to report information obtained from the police, Bogalusa, Louisiana, and two sources in that city concerning steps presently under way to organize the Deacons for Defense and Justice (DDJ). At a meeting held at Bogalusa 2-21-65 which was for the purpose of discussing the initiation of the DDJ, several local Negro leaders were present including some members of the Congress Of Racial Equality (CORE). One Ernest Thomas did most of the talking and explained the collection of initiation fees and dues, which monies would be used to purchase radio equipment, walkie-talkies, literature and ammunition. Thomas discussed the types of weapons which Negroes should purchase and said the group had contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons. The general tenor of Thomas' talk was that Negroes should arm themselves, not only for defensive reasons, but that they should have roving patrols so that if a Negro was being arrested by a police officer, other Negroes could come to the aid of the arrested person. Thomas said that if the Ku Klux Klan and white people generally wanted violence, they "intended to combat violence with violence."

[redacted] advised that upon information available the Bogalusa City Administration felt that the DDJ would not be too successful from the standpoint of membership and dues, but were concerned about the difficulties discussions of the type referred to above would have among the local Negro population. b7D

On 2-22-65 Robert Hicks, a Bogalusa Negro leader active in CORE, spoke before the Bogalusa Voters' League. He discussed Thomas' remarks of the previous evening before the DDJ and pointed out to those in attendance, most of whom were teenagers, the advantages of arming themselves. Hicks went into detail concerning how young Negroes could defend themselves by converging on police officers at the time the arrest of a Negro is being made.

157-2466

REC-33 157-2466-5

CONTINUED - OVER

5 MAR 8 1965

SFP:pdb
(9)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 pdb/jv

66 MAR 10 1965

MAIL ROOM

Memorandum to Mr. Sullivan
Re:- DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
157-2466

ACTION:

We have instructed the New Orleans Office to immediately initiate an intensive investigation of the DDJ because of the potential for violence indicated. New Orleans has been instructed to be alert for indications of subversive and/or outside influence; to be alert to any spread of the organization even though it now appears to be confined locally; and to set out leads for other offices promptly. They have been instructed to develop necessary sources and run out the allegation that the group has contacts in Chicago and Houston for weapons. Dissemination has already been made to Secret Service and the military intelligence at New Orleans; we are disseminating to the Department, Secret Service and the intelligence community in Washington, D. C.

2/26/65

1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. Baumgardner
1 - Mr. Trainor
1 - Mr. Gray
1 - Mr. Martin
1 - Mr. Phillips

AIRTEL

To: SAC, New Orleans (157-3290)

From: Director, FBI (157-2466)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
INFORMATION CONCERNING
(Internal Security)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

Reurtel 2/23/65 which reported information obtained from [redacted] Louisiana, concerning steps presently underway to organize the Deacons for Defense and Justice (DDJ). A meeting was held 2/21/65 at Bogalusa with several Negro leaders present, including some members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Purpose of meeting was to discuss an organization being initiated in Louisiana known as the Deacons for Defense and Justice. One Ernest Thomas did most of the talking and explained the collection of initiation fees and dues, which moneys would be used to purchase radio equipment, walkie-talkies, literature and ammunition. Thomas discussed the types of weapons which Negroes should purchase and urged that they possess plenty of ammunition. He said his group had contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons. b7D

The general tenor of Thomas' talk was that Negroes should arm themselves, not only for defensive reasons, but that they should have roving patrols so that if a Negro was being arrested by a police officer, other Negroes could come to the aid of the arrested person. Thomas said that if the Ku Klux Klan and white people generally wanted violence they "intended to combat violence with violence."

[redacted] advised that based upon information available, the Bogalusa City Administration felt that the DDJ would not be too successful from the standpoint of membership and dues, but were concerned about the difficulties b7D

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
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Trotter

SFP:kgd
(9)

REC-120 157-2466-6

MAR 5 1965

52 MAR 12 1965

MAIL ROOM ☑ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

discussions of the type referred to above would have among the local Negro population.

On 2/22/65 Robert Hicks, a Bogalusa Negro leader active in CORE, spoke before the Bogalusa Voters' League. He discussed Thomas' remarks of the previous evening before the DDJ and pointed out to the people in attendance, who were mostly teenage children, the advantages of arming themselves. Hicks went into detail concerning how young Negroes could defend themselves by converging on police officers at the time the arrest of a Negro is being made.

Bufiles reflect the only information available concerning the DDJ is that contained in your radiogram 1/6/65 and follow-up airtel and letterhead memorandum (LHM) 1/6/65 which reported on information obtained from a CORE representative and a member of the DDJ concerning the initiation of this new organization. Percy Lee Bradford, identified as President of the DDJ in your 1/6/65 communications, is probably identical to the individual by the same name who is a victim in recent investigations by your office under the character "Public Accommodations, Civil Rights Act of 1964", (your files 173-51, 173-196, 173-195 and 173-55).

There is no indication in communications submitted to date by your office that any investigation of captioned group is being initiated and it appears that the only sources from whom information has been received to date is the [redacted] and the two individuals mentioned in the 1/6/65 LHM. Because of the potential for violence indicated, you are instructed to immediately initiate an investigation of the DDJ. Be alert for any indications of subversive and/or outside influence. Although it appears that the DDJ is confined locally, be alert to any spread of the organization and set out leads for investigation by other offices promptly. Develop information concerning the allegation of Thomas that his group has contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons. Intensify efforts to develop sources relative to the DDJ and be alert to the possibility of discouraging illegal arming and illegal acts by the group through interviews. b7D

Expedite submission of LHM containing information in retel. It is noted that Secret Service, New Orleans, and Intelligence Corps Group, New Orleans, are being advised. Insure prompt local dissemination of all pertinent information as developed.

AIRTEL to SAC, New Orleans
RE: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
157-2466

The Bureau must be kept promptly advised of all developments relative to the DDJ and information suitable for dissemination should be promptly submitted by IHM.

It is noted that retel contained no reference to any prior communications whereas the information obviously tied in with your 1/6/65 communications. Failure to include appropriate reference, as required, results in an administrative burden at the Seat of Government. Remind responsible personnel concerning this matter.

FD-36 (Rev. 12-13-56)

FBI

Date: 2/26/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
PERCY LEE BRADFORD
RM

Re New Orleans teletype, 2/23/65 and New Orleans airtel, 2/24/65.

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight copies of a letterhead memorandum concerning captioned matter.

Enclosed for Chicago and Houston is one copy of above.

Copies furnished ICG and Secret Service, New Orleans.

8-Bureau (Encls.8)
1-Chicago (Encl.1) (Info)
1-Houston (Encl.1) (Info)
3-New Orleans (1-157-3290)
(1-173-201)
(1-157-3534)

1cc disseminated to Proximity Relation

FAS:cjo1 cc detached by
(8) Klan-Hate Group Unit

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC SER
DEPT ISD, CRD
DATE FORW: 3-5-65
HOW FORW: routing slip
BY [illegible]

REC-3 157-2466

EX-117

MAR 1 1965

C.C. - WICH

ENCLOSURE

9 REC

SUPER CONTROL

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

67 MAR 15 1965

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

New Orleans, Louisiana
February 26, 1965

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

Informant

On February 24, 1965, [redacted], Louisiana, and temporary acting [redacted], informed as follows concerning the captioned organization: b6 b7C b7D

He stated that on the night of February 21, 1965, he had attended a meeting in the early evening of the 21 members of the Executive Committee of the Bogalusa Voters League. He stated that he had then gone to another meeting and had not been present at a meeting being held at the Bogalusa Labor Temple. He stated he subsequently found out that on the night of February 21, 1965, there had been a meeting attended by six members of Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), three of whom he knew were William Yates, Stephen Miller and a Charles Fenton. He stated there were three colored members of CORE also in attendance, but he did not know specifically who they were. (Steve)

L01

He stated that he had no knowledge of the actual nature of the discussion of this particular group which met with some other Bogalusa Negro citizens; however, he learned of the results of this on the night of February 22, 1965, at which time they had a general meeting of the Bogalusa Voters League.

He stated on that occasion Robert Hicks, [redacted], Louisiana, took the floor and told the meeting which was attended by about fifty percent adults and fifty percent teenagers, of the plans of the Deacons for Defense and Justice. b6 b7C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-81 BY SP1 gw/fk

ENCLOSURE

157-2466-7

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

In overhearing Hicks' discussion of this matter which Hicks had obviously learned from the CORE people at the Sunday evening meeting, the Deacons for Defense of Justice intended to organize a group to promote civil rights and its purposes were much the same as those of CORE, except that this group intended to purchase citizens band, radio walkie-talkies and other equipment for the purpose of communicating with one another in case of violence against Negroes in the Bogalusa community.

He stated that they talked, apparently at this meeting, about arming the Negro population in order that if any difficulty should arise with the police or with the Ku Klux Klan, or any other group, that the Negroes would be in a position to defend themselves and defend their fellow citizens who may be in some sort of difficulty.

[redacted] advised that he personally was not in sympathy with this position or with this program and would not, under any circumstances, advocate that his people went along with arming themselves as in doing so, they would place themselves in the exact position that the Ku Klux Klan is doing, that of taking the law into their own hands. b7D

He stated that through his organization, the Bogalusa Voters League, he would make no effort to back this type of program or plan, but desired to continue to work peaceably through his Bogalusa Voters League, through his Negro community, and through the Bogalusa City Council in order to bring about a complete and peaceful integration of the entire Bogalusa community.

He stated that plans to enroll Bogalusa citizens in the Deacons for Defense of Justice at $10.00 per person plus dues, probably would not receive a warm welcome at Bogalusa, although he personally realized that a certain segment of the population in the Negro community would be affected by this sort of talk and that he, representing the

Bogalusa Voters League, was not in a position where he could appeal to these people on an intelligent level as this matter would be entirely emotional with them.

He stated that he hopes that he could do something to prevent development of this sort of activity in the Bogalusa community.

Robert Hicks, [redacted] Louisiana, advised on February 25, 1965, that on the night of February 21, 1965, a meeting was held at Bogalusa, Louisiana, among several of the local Negro citizens and six members of CORE who he identified as a Reverend Frederick Kirkpatrick, a Negro, Ernest Thomas, Negro, Charles Fenton, white, a Steve Miller, white, William Yates, white, and another Negro whose name he does not recall. b6 b7C

The nature of this meeting was to explain to the Bogalusa Negro community or its representatives, of the need for an organization to aid the Negro in protecting himself from elements in his community. He stated that this organization was to be known as the Deacons for the Defense of Justice and that the dues were to be $10.00 initiation fee and $2.00 per month per person. He stated that of this money a certain percentage would be contributed to the statewide headquarters which was to have been established at Jonesboro, Louisiana. He stated that one of the CORE workers, namely Reverend Kirkpatrick and Ernest Thomas, discussed the considerable length that the monies were to be used from the dues and initiation fees to pay radio equipment, including walkie-talkies, citizens band equipment, as well as ammunition and other various pieces of equipment. He stated that there was some discussion about the Negroes arming themselves and there was discussion about machine guns and purchase of machine guns as well as ammunition. He stated that he personally had discussed with the members of the Bogalusa Voters League on the night of February 22, 1965, the membership in this

organization and tried to stimulate interest. He stated that he was not too sure at this time, however, as to whether this organization was a good thing in view of the discussion about weapons and ammunition and in essence, a new militant position. He stated that the members from CORE who had met with them had discussed the fact that they had a charter for this organization but that he, Hicks, had not yet seen the charter and he did not expect to take any further action as to actually soliciting membership until such time as he could see the charter, study it, and discuss it at some length with an attorney.

Hicks indicated that there had been temporary persons elected by this group, but did not identify these temporary officers. He did, however, point out that there was to be an additional meeting of those people who were interested in the Deacons for Defense of Justice on Sunday night, February 28, 1965, but that he did not know at this time whether there would be any CORE representatives or whether the members from Jonesboro who had inaugurated this program would be and to further spell out the aims and purposes of the Deacons for Defense of Justice.

(William) La

On February 26, 1965, William John Yates, CORE Task Force Worker advised that on February 21, 1965, he, along with several other workers for CORE appeared at two meetings in Bogalusa, Louisiana, at which time he spoke to the local Negro population in attendance at these meetings concerning the above organization. Yates stated that this organization was originated in the Jonesboro, Louisiana, area during the Summer of 1964. He stated that he believes the purpose of this organization is to assist Negroes in securing their rights to protect their homes and their families. Yates stated that this organization assists and advises Negroes as to the procurement of arms as well as instructs them how to obtain legal counsel in the event of court appearances.

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

Yates stated that Robert Hicks, a local Negro leader in Bogalusa, Louisiana, is the representative of this organization in the Bogalusa area. Yates stated that on Monday, February 22, 1965, Robert Hicks addressed a meeting of the local Negroes in Bogalusa at which time he stated that the above captioned organization was being organized in the Bogalusa area.

Yates noted that Richard Haley, Regional Director for CORE in the southeastern portion of the United States does not approve of the above captioned organization in that he feels that it is wrong for Negroes as part of an organization to secure arms, but feels that it is justifiable for individual Negro citizens to want to secure arms to defend their homes and families.

Yates was unable to furnish any information as to how the procurement of arms was handled by the Deacons for Defense and Justice. Yates stated that he believes that this organization will be formed in the Bogalusa area in the near future.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FD-36 (Rev. 12-13-56)

FBI

Date: 3/4/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority or Method of Mailing)

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290) (P)

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
PERCY LEE BRADFORD
RM

Re New Orleans airtel of 2/24/65, and 2/26/65.

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight copies of a letterhead memorandum concerning captioned matter.

Enclosed for Chicago and Houston is one copy of above.

Copies furnished ICG and Secret Service, New Orleans.

ENCLOSURE

3 - Bureau (Encl. 8)
1 - Chicago (Encl. 1) (Info)
1 - Houston (Encl. 1) (Info)
3 - New Orleans (1: 157-3290)
(1: 173-201)
(1: 157-3534)

FAS:sjt
(8)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gcw/pf

1 cc detached by
Klan-Hate Group Unit REC-3

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC SER
DEPT ISD, CRD, Dept. of Commerce (CRS)
DATE FORW: 3-8-65
HOW FORW: routing slip
BY KWG: EJ

157-24668

10 MAR 10 1965

C. C. Wick

Approved _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

66 MAR 15 1965

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

New Orleans, Louisiana
March 4, 1965

49
16

DEACONS-FOR-DEFENSE-AND-JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

On March 1, 1965, The Chief of Police, Claxton Knight, Bogalusa, Louisiana Police Department, informed that on the night of February 28, 1965, a volunteer meeting of the Deacons For Defense and Justice met at the Bogalusa Colored Union Hall, located on Third Avenue. He stated that this group which met was entirely local and was obviously a group which was following up the meeting of the previous week, which meeting had been attended by Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) members, and individuals from Jonesboro, Louisiana.

Chief Knight stated that this meeting was obviously not attended by a sufficient number of Bogalusa Negro population to indicate much interest on the part of Bogalusa Negroes in the Deacons for Defense and Justice.

He provided the following names of those individuals who attended this meeting, which lasted approximately 35 or 40 minutes. He stated a total of 14 Negroes attended this meeting. Four of these individuals he was unable to identify. The others are as follows:

b6
b7C

Andrew Smith, [redacted] employed at Crown-Zellerbach Corporation, Bogalusa.

Willie J. Bickham, [redacted] employed at Hoffman Electric Supply Co., Bogalusa.

b6
b7C

J. D. Godbolt, [redacted], employed at Crown Zellerbach Corporation, Bogalusa.

Joshusa Mondy, Jr., Varnado, Louisiana, employment unknown.

L.A.

43

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gal

157-2466-8

ENCLOSURE

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

Roman Burris, [redacted] employed at Ray's Barber Shop, 600 4th Street, Bogalusa, LA

b6
b7C

Robert Hicks, [redacted], employment unknown.

Charles Simms, [redacted] employed Keyston Insurance Agency, Bogalusa, LA

b6
b7C

Theodore R. Newman, [redacted], employment unknown.

Alton Davis, wife's name Sue, local address unknown, employment unknown.

b6
b7C

Willie Harris, [redacted] employed as cab driver for A. Z. Young.

Chief Knight informed that his inquiry into the Deacons for Defense and Justice will continue in view of the potentialities for possible civic strife which might arise out of this type of organization.

He stated that it was concensus, and that of his Assistant Chief, L. C. Tarrell, that this organization was probably not going to be successful in Bogalusa, as he was of the impression that his Negro community were not desirous of becoming affiliated in any way with an organization which had as its purpose a defiance of law and order.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

TO : MR. BELMONT

DATE: March 15, 1965

FROM : J. H. GALE

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

Mr. Harold Reis of the Department telephonically advised that Governor LeRoy Collins, Director of the Community Relations Service, was in to see the Attorney General this morning at which time Collins expressed a great deal of concern with reference to an organization known as the Deacons for Defense and Justice which is located in Jonesboro, Louisiana. He advised that the organization is led by an extremely militant Negro whose name he didn't know and is the Negro counterpart of the Minute Men. He was desirous of being furnished any background information we have on this organization and of any investigation we are conducting concerning the same.

A check with the Domestic Intelligence Division concerning this organization reveals our New Orleans Office has previously advised concerning the Deacons for Defense and Justice. Information was furnished to the Civil Rights Division and the Internal Security Division of the Department by memoranda dated February 24, 1965, and March 4, 1965. The Deacons for Defense and Justice is a recently formed Negro organization in the State of Louisiana, including members of CORE and individuals from Jonesboro, Louisiana. At a meeting February 21, 1965, at Bogalusa, Louisiana, one Ernest Thomas who did most of the talking stated that the collection of initiation fees and dues are to be used to purchase radio equipment, walkie-talkies, literature and ammunition. Thomas pointed out Negroes should arm themselves, not only for defensive reasons, but that the Negroes should have roving patrols so that if a Negro was being arrested by a

1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Gale

REC-1 157-2466-9

3 MAR 18 1965

CONTINUED - OVER

JHG:tjm
(6)

64 MAR 25 1965

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-81 BY SP1 81/fv

TEN

police officer other Negroes could come to the aid of the arrested person.

Immediate investigation was initiated by the field because of the indicated potential for violence. Investigation is to include the identification of Ernest Thomas and the activity of the organization.

Information has been furnished to Secret Service as well as military intelligence concerning this group. Investigation is being closely followed.

ACTION:

Since information concerning the Deacons for Defense and Justice has already been furnished to the Department, Mr. Reis' attention will be called to the previous memoranda furnished to the Civil Rights Division and the Internal Security Division.

3-19-65

PLAINTEXT

1 - Mr. Trainor
1 - Mr. Freund

TELETYPE

DEFERRED

TO SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3693)

FROM DIRECTOR, FBI

JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL PAREN NEGRO END PAREN, JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, RACIAL MATTER.

RE NEW ORLEANS TEL MARCH EIGHTEEN LAST.

NEW ORLEANS CONSIDER INTERVIEWING PERCY LEE BRADFORD AND EARNEST THOMAS, PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT RESPECTIVELY, DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC. IF REASON EXISTS FOR NOT INTERVIEWING EITHER, ADVISE BUREAU DETAILS.

EXPEDITE PRIOR BUREAU INSTRUCTIONS RE DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE AND KEEP BUREAU CURRENTLY ADVISED. CONTINUE TO SUBMIT LETTERHEAD MEMORANDA PROMPTLY. 157-2466

NOT RECORDED
174 MAR 24 1965

FHF:JMW (5)

1 - Deacons for Defense and Justice, Inc.

NOTE: Deacons for Defense and Justice is a Negro group in Louisiana allegedly formed to provide assistance to Negroes being arrested. Group alleged to be arming. Captioned situation involves Negroes protesting and demonstrating as result of rumor that high school coach Kirkpatrick reportedly active in recent civil rights activity was to be dismissed from position. Some indication that Deacons for Defense and Justice might be involved in violence in connection with this action. New Orleans previously instructed to expedite investigation of alleged organization to determine existence, leadership and activities and to consider complete interviews of leaders. Teletype being sent because of volatile racial situation and indication that Deacons for Defense and Justice may be involved.

ORIGINAL FILED IN 157-2884-28 157-6-3-31

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

58 MAR 30 1965

DUPLICATE YELLOW OF WIRE TRANSMITTED

FD-36 (Rev. 12-13-56)

FBI

Date: 3/3/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS

SUBJECT: ORIGINAL KNIGHTS OF THE
KU KLUX KLAN
RM
NO FILE: [redacted] b3 b7E

TESTING OF LOCAL FACILITIES,
BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA;
PUBLIC ACCOMODATIONS,
PUBLIC FACILITES;
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964
RM
NO FILE: 173-201
BUFILE: 173-987

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA;
PERCY LEE BRADFORD b3
RM b7E
NO FILE: 157-3290
BUFILE: 157-2466

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

Reference New Orleans teletype to Bureau and New Orleans airtel to Bureau 2/26/65 entitled "DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE; JONESBORO, LOUISIANA; PERCY LEE BRADFORD, RM."

9 - Bureau
7 - New Orleans (2: 157-3290)
(2: 173-201) b3
(2: [redacted]) b7E
(1: 157-1319)

FAS:sjt
(16)

CARBON COPY

157-2466

NOT RECORDED
202 MAR 19 1965

ORIGINAL FILED IN

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

56 MAR 24 1965

b3
b7E

NO [redacted]:sjt

On 3/1/65, [redacted], La., advised that he was providing the following information on a highly confidential basis to SA FRANK A SASS, JR., primarily because only four individuals are aware of the information set forth below. b7D

[redacted] stated that he has the utmost confidence in the FBI but that he does not want any other governmental agency to know the following information at this time. He stated that on 3/1/65, he, [redacted], [redacted] Commissioner of Public Safety ARNOLD SPIERS, Colonel THOMAS BURBANK, Director of Public Safety and Superintendent of Louisiana State Police, met with Louisiana Governor JOHN MC KEITHEN at Baton Rouge, La. At that time two principal subjects were discussed, one being the Deacons for Defense and Justice, the other being the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (OKKKK). b7D

At this time [redacted] stated that the details of a meeting between several members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and two or three other colored individuals from Jonesboro, Louisiana, who met with Bogalusa Negroes on 2/21/65, was discussed. [redacted] stated that the Governor and Colonel BURBANK were made aware of the existence of this organization, The Deacons for Defense and Justice in Louisiana, and of its possible propensity for violence depending upon the degree of organization that may be established in the future. He stated that the Governor was made aware of information developed at Bogalusa concerning Negroes belonging to this organization, arming themselves, etc. b7D

He stated that he also pointed out to the Governor the importance of keeping these types of individuals and this type of organization out of the Bogalusa area, in view of the strength of the Ku Klux Klan in that area. He stated that Governor Mc Keithen was very much concerned about this group and informed him, [redacted], that he would discuss this matter with Louisiana State Attorney General, JACK GREMILLION, to see if any Louisiana State Statutes might be applied to break up this organization prior to it actually getting underway. b7D

b3
b7E

NO [redacted] :sjt

[redacted] stated that they also discussed b7D
at some length the OKKKK, particularly as this pertained to Bogalusa, which he stated is without question the better organized units of all units in Louisiana.

He stated that they discussed together in some detail the advantages and disadvantages of making a request through the Louisiana Congressional Delegates, including Congressman HALE BOGGS, Senator ALLAN J. ELLENDER Senator RUSSELL LONG, Congressman JAMES H. MORRISON, and others to apply pressure to some governmental investigative body with subpoena powers to investigate this organization in Louisiana. [redacted] stated the b7D
main feeling of the Governor was that if a governmental agency with subpoena power could inquire into the structure of the OKKKK and into its purposes and aims with respect to its violence potential, that this may cause the organization to dissolve as a result of its exposure to the public.

[redacted] emphasized that this matter is b7D
only in the talking stages at this time, but that he hoped that possibly some decision could be arrived at in the next couple of weeks as to the merits of making such a request. He stated that it was agreed that no action would be taken by the Governor until such time as the Governor again communicated with him and informed him of his plans.

In this repect, [redacted] stated that he b7D
personally would more than welcome some Federal investigative body with subpoena powers delving into the OKKKK, particularly as that will affect his community. He stated that his hands are completely tied, in this respect, and in fact, he feels that his personal reputation has been considerably damaged by allegations and inferences that he personally is a member of the OKKKK, which he stated is definitely not true. He stated that he could swear almost without question that none of the members of his City Council were members of the OKKKK, with the exception of his City Attorney, ROBERT T. RESTER. In this respect, however, he stated that he could not prove that RESTER was a member of the OKKKK, but knew from his sources and friends that RESTER was so involved.

NO [redacted]:sjt

b3
b7E

[redacted] informed that it was true that he knew many individuals who he felt were members of the Klan, as did the members of his City Council, which he stated possibly gave people "guilt by association" impression. b7D

He stated that he has aired publicly through the news media at Bogalusa and through the local radio station his views whenever possible, but that somehow the national press already created a bad image of the Bogalusa community as a whole, and he felt that possibly some personal appearance before a government investigative body could correct some of this misunderstanding.

[redacted] stated that he is well aware of the FBI's responsibility with respect to organizations as The Deacons for Defense and Justice, and the OKKKK. He stated that he was most willing to co-operate at all times with the FBI, as he felt that the FBI had been of much assistance to his Police Department already in keeping the local authorities advised of potential demonstrations, etc. He stated that he would immediately advise the FBI of any information which he received from the Governor which would indicate the Governor's plans. b7D

This matter is being followed on a continuing basis at Bogalusa and if any plans are finalized, the Bureau will be informed by letterhead memorandum suitable for dissemination.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : MR. BELMONT

DATE: March 15, 1965

FROM : J. H. GALE

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

As indicated in my previous memorandum today, Mr. Reis requested information concerning the above-captioned organization, in view of a conversation which Governor LeRoy Collins, Director of the Community Relations Service, had with the Attorney General this morning. Mr. Reis was referred to our memoranda dated February 24, and March 4, 1965, advising the Department concerning this extremely militant Negro organization.

Mr. Reis was appreciative of this information and advised that he had now received additional information that Governor Collins or his aide, Jerome Heilbron, had received a tip that the Deacons for Defense and Justice, Jonesboro, Louisiana, would do something "drastic" in the next two or three days. He was unable to furnish any specifics but requested that Governor Collins be contacted to see what specifics he had concerning this matter.

ACTION

That Governor Collins be contacted to determine the specifics of the alleged information in his possession that the Deacons for Defense and Justice would do something drastic in the next two or three days and that the New Orleans Office be immediately alerted to this information for their assistance in closely following this organization -- if approved, to be handled by the Domestic Intelligence Division.

Being done

1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. Gale
1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Sullivan

REC-1 157-2466-10

JHG:LS
(6)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 Sal/jk

3 MAR 18 1965

58 MAR 30 1965

TEN

- F.H. Freund

3-16-65

PLAINTEXT

TELETYPE DEFERRED

TO SAC NEW ORLEANS

FROM DIRECTOR, FBI

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, RACIAL MATTERS (ORGANIZATION). RE NEW ORLEANS TEL MARCH SIXTEEN INSTANT, CAPTIONED JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL (NEGRO), JONESBORO, LOUISIANA. NEW ORLEANS EXPEDITE INVESTIGATION OF CAPTIONED ALLEGED ORGANIZATION TO DETERMINE ITS EXISTENCE, LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES. INVESTIGATION SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO POINT WHERE FULL AND COMPLETE INTERVIEWS CAN BE CONDUCTED WITH LEADERS. EXPEDITE AND KEEP BUREAU IMMEDIATELY ADVISED OF PERTINENT DEVELOPMENTS.

FHF:JMW (3)

NOTE: Deacons for Defense and Justice is a Negro group formed in Louisiana with one Ernest Thomas apparently its spokesman. Thomas has told Negroes they should arm themselves and form roving patrols which will assist Negroes when the Negroes are being arrested. Initiation fees and dues of the group are to be used to purchase ammunition, radio ~~[illegible]~~ equipment and literature. The New Orleans Office is conducting a current investigation of this group to determine its activities and leadership.

EX-112 REC 53 57-2466-11

21 MAR 18 1965

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAR 16 1965
TELETYPE

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

56 MAR 26 1965

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Contad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☑

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAR 16 1965
TELETYPE

FBI NEW ORLS

FBI WASH DC

607PM DEFERRED 3-16-65 RPP

TO NEW ORLEANS

FROM DIRECTOR 1P

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, RACIAL MATTERS (ORGNIZATION).

RE NEW ORLEANS TEL MARCH SIXTEEN INSTANT, CAPTIONED JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL (NEGRO), JONESBORO, LOUISIANA. NEW ORLEANS EXPEDITE INVESTIGATION OF CAPTIONED ALLEGED ORGANIZATION TO DETERMINE ITS EXISTENCE, LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES. INVESTIGATION SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO POINT WHERE FULL AND COMPLETE INTERVIEWS CAN BE CONDUCTED WITH LEADERS. EXPEDITE AND KEEP BUREAU IMMEDIATELY ADVISED OF PERTINENT DEVELOPMENTS.

END

NO....RJS

FBI NEW ORLS

TU CLR

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. Mohr
1 - Mr. DeLoach

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gcw/ [illegible]

TO : Mr. W. C. Sullivan

DATE: March 20, 1965

FROM : Mr. F. J. Baumgardner

1 - Mr. Gale
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Bland
1 - Mr. Baumgardner
1 - Mr. Cregar
1 - Mr. Gray

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
RACIAL MATTERS (ORGANIZATION)

This is to advise you of the nature of captioned organization and its current activities. The Deacons for Defense and Justice is a Negro group allegedly being formed in the State of Louisiana. Its headquarters are believed to be in Jonesboro, Louisiana. Its President is reportedly Percy Lee Bradford and its Vice President is reportedly Earnest Thomas. Thomas has told Negroes that they should arm and form roving patrols which will assist any Negroes who may be arrested. Initiation fees and dues of this alleged group are to be used to purchase ammunition, radio equipment and literature. The New Orleans Office is conducting a current investigation of this alleged group to determine if it is in existence, the identities of its leadership and its specific activities. Currently, the Deacons for Defense and Justice appear to be interested in a demonstration which has been occurring at the Jackson High School (Negro), Jonesboro, Louisiana. Students there have been demonstrating in protest of the rumored dismissal of the Athletic Coach F. D. Kirkpatrick for his recent activity in behalf of civil rights. School authorities have not made known whether the coach is to be dismissed or the basis for such a dismissal.

Leroy Collins, Director, Community Relations Service, Department of Commerce, has expressed an interest in captioned organization. Pertinent information has been furnished to the Community Relations Service, Civil Rights Division and Internal Security Division of the Department, as well as military intelligence agencies and appropriate state and local authorities in the State of Louisiana.

New Orleans is following this matter closely and has been instructed to expedite its investigation of the captioned organization. We have been pressing for early interviews of Bradford and Thomas for the deterrent value such interviews might have. New Orleans has advised that since Bradford and Thomas are taking an active part in negotiations throught the Community Relations Service with school authorities in an effort to resolve this dispute, they will not be interviewed until after a meeting 3/22/65 of the school board and the leaders of factions involved. This seems reasonable because otherwise we might be injecting ourselves into the middle of this school dispute. We are continuing to press vigorously our investigation of captioned organization.

RECOMMENDATION:

For information.

AMG:chs:pah
(11)

REC 131 157-2466-12

10 MAR 25 1965

(D-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

FBI

Date: 3/26/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-81 BY SP1 [illegible]

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (157-2466)

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290) (P)

SUBJECT: "CHANGED"
DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC.
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA
RM

The title is marked changed to show the correct corporate name of this organization, which was previously referred to before it was incorporated by the name Deacons for Defense and Justice.

Enclosed to the Bureau are 10 copies of a letterhead memorandum in this matter; the extra copies are submitted for the Bureau file in the matter captioned JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL (NEGRO), JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, RM.

LEADS

NEW ORLEANS DIVISION

AT JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

Will conduct interviews with the officers and leaders of Deacons of Defense and Justice, Jonesboro, Louisiana, as set forth below to determine in detail the objectives of the organization and how these objectives are to be attained, with particular emphasis on possible use of firearms, potential for violence, any subversive and/or outside influence, whether patrols and guards

3 - Bureau (Enc-10)
4 - New Orleans
(2-157-3290)
(2-157-3693)

EC/bab (7)

REC-42

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC SER
DEPT ISD, CRD
DATE FORW: 4-6-65
HOW FORW:
BY: MCT-AI 157-2466

8 APR 8 1965

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

have been utilized and under what conditions; develop any information, particularly from EARNEST THOMAS, concerning the allegation of THOMAS that this group has contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons; as instructed by Bureau by airtel dated 2/26/65 intensify efforts to develop sources relative to DDJ and be alert to discouraging illegal arming and illegal acts by the group through interviews. To be interviewed: PERCY LEE BRADFORD, EARNEST THOMAS, CHARLIE WHITE, COSETTA JACKSON, HENRY AMOS, FREDERICK DOUGLAS KIRKPATRICK, ELMO JACOBS, ALLEN SCHERRAH, OLIN SATCHER, E. L. PATTERSON, and ODIS MARTIN.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

Additional information on this organization and its activity at Bogalusa, Louisiana, was furnished in memoranda dated February 24, 1965 captioned "Deacons for Defense and Justice"; and February 26, 1965 and March 4, 1965 captioned "Deacons for Defense and Justice, Jonesboro, Louisiana, Percy Lee Bradford."

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

New Orleans, Louisiana
March 25, 1965

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC.
JONESBORO, LOUISIANA

From July 1964 to October 9, 1964 the town of Jonesboro, Louisiana, had 5 Negro special police officers, during racial demonstrations and testing of Public Accommodations and Public Facilities under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Three of the officers were Rev. Frederick Douglas Kirkpatrick, Coach at Jackson High School, Jonesboro, Louisiana, Henry Collins Amos, and Elmo Jacobs -- all of whom had other employment and served on a part-time basis without pay. These Negro special police positions were discontinued by the town of Jonesboro on October 9, 1964.

Henry Collins Amos advised on January 5, 1965 the Negroes organized a Negro Patrol of the Negro section of town to guard against such incidents as a Ku Klux Klan motor parade through the Negro section which occurred July 16, 1964 also to remove the fear among Negroes of incidents that might occur from Klansmen going into the Negro Section for possible acts of reprisal in the Negro section or persons exercising their rights, particularly rights granted under the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Amos stated that he felt that the Negro section was in need of police protection, which he said could not be had from the regular law enforcement officers of the area, particularly after the special Negro police were discontinued. Amos stated that the name the group adopted was Deacons for Defense and Justice (later incorporated under the name Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc., (DDJ). Amos stated that the leader of the group was Percy Lee Bradford. Amos said that DDJ patrols were not ordinarily armed but that they were to have available to them firearms if needed for self-defense.

Reverend Frederick Douglas Kirkpatrick, Coach, Jackson High School, Jonesboro, advised on January 5, 1965 that DDJ was a non-violent organization within Jackson Parish formed to promote justice for the Negro. Kirkpatrick stated that the DDJ followed the same principals as laid down by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE),

ENCLOSURE
157 2966 13

except its members would, if attacked, defend themselves by use of force. He said the DDJ had two citizens band radios and two walkie talkies to be used to communicate with one another in case violence against a Negro should be initiated in Jackson Parish. Kirkpatrick stated that there were between 250 and 300 members of DDJ within the parish; he said that they did not carry arms, although possession of shotguns and rifles for hunting is commonplace in the area. He said that the following were leaders at that time of DDJ, which was not chartered, or incorporated, at that time:

B. APPROX. [redacted]

b6
b7C

President: Percy Lee Bradford
Vice President: Henry Collins Amos
Secretary: Frederick Douglas Kirkpatrick
Finance Secretary: Allen Scherrah
Group Leaders: Earnest Thomas, Charles Cosetta Jackson, Odis Martin, Olin Satcher, E. L. Patterson.

On January 5, 1965 Chief Adrian G. Peevy, Jonesboro Police Department, and Sheriff Newt T. Loe, Jackson Parish Sheriff's Office, Jonesboro, advised that they were aware of the existence of such a group as DDJ and were aware of patrols of such a group.

Charles Joseph Fenton, representative of CORE at Jonesboro, Louisiana, advised January 5, 1965 that an organization known as Deacons for Defense of Justice, with Percy Lee Bradford, Negro male, age about 44, as president, has been organized at Jonesboro, Louisiana. He stated that this organization was organized to promote Negroes' civil rights and that its purposes were much the same as those of CORE. He stated that whereas CORE is completely non-violent in its methods of dealing with civil rights matters, DDJ would be more militant and inclined to use violence in dealing with any violent opposition encountered. He stated that the DDJ has night patrols in the Negro sections of Jonesboro and he feels that these night patrols are armed.

Following is a clipping from the New York Times, Sunday, February 21, 1965 under dateline February 19, 1965 at Jonesboro, Louisiana:

21, 1965

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1965

Armed Negroes Make Jonesboro an Unusual Town

By [illegible] CYTLEDGE

Special to The New York Times

JONESBORO, La., Feb. 19 — To a stranger passing through this little town of 4,000 in the piney woods of northern Louisiana, there is little evidence that Jonesboro differs in any way from hundreds of other Southern communities where segregation remains the way of life.

White residents say "howdy" to each other and to white strangers when they pass on the sidewalk that connects the movie house, the feed and seed store, the auto accessory shops, and the main drug store. Negro residents edge toward the curb when they pass a white man, and their heads bow ever so slightly.

In Jonesboro, as in hundreds of other small towns throughout the Deep South, the 1964 Civil Rights Act is obeyed only under the threat of legal action. Most eating places remain segregated; some have become "private clubs." There is a "colored" sign over a ticket window in the bus station, and there are similar signs over the restrooms of the dimly lighted courthouse.

But Jonesboro is different. Here the Negroes, who make up about a third of the population, have organized themselves into a mutual protection association, employing guns and shortwave radios.

Organized Last Summer

The organization, called the Deacons for Defense and Justice, was organized quietly last summer.

Percy Lee Bradford, a stockroom worker and the founder and president of the Deacons, said harassment from the Ku Klux Klan and allied groups had decreased markedly since the Deacons made their philosophy known. So far, the guns have not been fired.

He expressed the philosophy simply: "We pray a lot, but we stay alert, too."

The Deacons were formed spontaneously, their leaders said, after young field workers for the Congress of Racial Equality came to Jonesboro to start a civil rights campaign. White youths visited the CORE headquarters and threatened to return with 12[illegible] others to make trouble.

Within minutes the word had spread through the Negro neighborhood, which is called the Quarters and which consists of rows of unpainted frame houses with tin roofs, set closely together on poorly paved streets. Dozens of Negroes appeared on the streets, carrying guns. Most rural Southerners, regardless of race or income level, own at least one gun.

Diligent Patrols

That was the informal beginning of the Deacons. Now the organization, which is estimated to have between 45 and 150 active members, patrols the Quarters diligently.

A white visitor to the CORE office this week was observed entering the neighborhood; a phone call immediately went to Charles Fenton, a 23-year-old white New York native who is a CORE field worker.

"They just wanted to make sure everything was all right," said the tall, slim youth with a smile as he called off the potential alert.

Had the visitor desired to make trouble, several dozen Deacons would have been expected to arrive at the CORE office within minutes, carrying guns and portable citizens-band radios. Among them would have been a young Negro man, a former platoon sergeant in the Army, who is Mr. Fenton's self-assigned, personal bodyguard.

"I wouldn't let anything happen to that boy," said the body guard. "He's just like a brother to me."

As a CORE worker, Mr. Fenton believes in nonviolence. He has had to carefully explain his feelings to the Deacons, some of whom could not immediately understand why Mr. Fenton didn't want them to bring their weapons into the office.

"I hope that they will become a civic organization," he said, "bettering the community and eventually making the defense part of it obsolete. They want to extend their efforts to include other things—negotiating with downtown, becoming more active in Jonesboro's political life.

"But still, no one can tell what would have happened here, if the Deacons hadn't formed their own ideas of protection."

Mr. Fenton came here last summer, as hundreds of other rights workers came to the South, to assist Negroes in registering to vote, to help in desegregation attempts, and to try to organize Negro residents around their grievances.

Many of Jonesboro's residents, Negro and white, earn their livings from the forests that surround their homes. Two large corporations, the Olin Mathieson Chemical Company and Continental Can, have paper plants here that continue a tradition of lumbering that was started during the Civil War.

The Negroes complain that they can hardly expect to hold anything but menial jobs. The median family income in Jackson Parish in 1960 for everyone was $3,683; for Negroes, it was $1,94[illegible].

Mr. Fenton expresses delight over the organization of the Deacons, because it represents an indigenous organization—one of CORE's goals. His job has become that of "liaison and helper" instead of leader.

"Hopefully," he said, "I will be able to help them translate their power into political terms as this thing progresses."

There has been harassment of Negroes testing the desegregation of public accommodations during the last year but little difficulty, according to the Negroes, with voter registration.

In mid-January, two Negro churches were burned. Students from Loyola and Tulane Universities in New Orleans and Southern University in Baton Rouge have started projects to rebuild them.

The Deacons believe that their mere existence has kept Jonesboro from developing into a civil rights battleground. They insist that they will not misuse the power that unity has given them.

Make Their Interest Known

On several occasions, they said, they have let the county law enforcement authorities know that they were interested in the treatment given Negroes after arrest on minor violations, and the authorities have been more careful than usual.

In another case, they said, a white posse was searching for a 17-year-old Negro who had been accused of kissing a white girl against her will. The Deacons found the boy and took him into protective custody. They said that the girl had then changed her story.

One member of the Deacons observed: "If it hadn't been for this club, doubtless this boy would have been lynched."

So far, much of the white community declines to acknowledge the existence of the group to outsiders who come asking questions. It is obvious, however, that the Deacons are widely known and somewhat feared here.

Sheriff Newt Loe of Jackson Parish, of which Jonesboro is the seat, declined to comment on the Deacons to a reporter. He said: "If I have anything to give out, I'd give it to my newspaper boys around here. We got boys in Shreveport and Monroe who see things the way we do, and I give everything to them."

~~ENCLOSURE~~

NO 157-3290

Chief Deputy Sheriff James Van Beasley, Jackson Parish Sheriff's Office, Jonesboro, advised on March 20, 1965 that the Sheriff's Office had been aware of the existence of such an organization as DDJ for about three or four months and had seen Negro men apparently on patrol, or on guard in areas of testing of public accommodations by Negroes under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. He stated that the Negro men most often observed on the apparent patrols or guard details included Percy Lee Bradford, Earnest Thomas, Frederick Douglas Kirkpatrick, Cosetta Jackson, Elmo Jacobs, Olin Satcher, and Henry Collins Amos.

Beasley stated also that an article had been submitted from Jonesboro and published in the New York Times on February 21, 1965 recounting real or imaginary activities of DDJ, and in the article statements were made that members of DDJ were armed and equipped with citizens band (CB) radios. Beasley stated that transmissions by Negroes on CB radios had been monitored on many occasions at Jonesboro, indicating that the Negro patrols and guard details were on duty, but no record had been kept of such transmissions that were monitored.

Beasley stated that on January 30, 1965 about 10 unknown white persons were visiting in Jonesboro at the CORE office during the day and that night they were at the Minute Spot, a Negro cafe, along with Percy Lee Bradford, Earnest Thomas, Elmo Jacobs, Lee Gilbert, and other Negroes. He stated that activities of that day indicated that the Negroes had been providing patrols and guards in connection with the visiting white persons and that night, just before midnight, Deputies Beasley, Douglas McBride, and M. J. Walker, drove by the Minute Spot Cafe and observed Bradford, Thomas, Amos, Jacobs, and Lee Gilbert standing in front of the cafe. Gilbert was holding in his hands a shotgun, and the officers stopped and arrested him. Gilbert claimed that the shotgun was not his and that he was merely holding it, but he gave no information on whose gun it was or whom he got it from. Recovered from him was a 12 gauge shotgun loaded with a "ring" shell, and eight other "ring" shells were recovered from his pockets. A "ring" shell was described as a shotgun shell with a cut ring around the shell, so that when the shell is discharged in the gun, not only are the pellets expelled through the gun barrel, but a

portion of the shell casing is discharged with the load, making a large slug-type projectile. Beasley stated that Gilbert was in the presence of Bradford, Thomas, [redacted], and Jacobs, when he was arrested, and that they arrived at the jail promptly to bond him out after he was charged with displaying a dangerous weapon in a public place while under the influence of intoxicants. He said that Gilbert later entered a plea of guilty to the charge. b7D

Beasley stated that he felt reasonably sure that these patrols and guard details were armed, because on recent occasions some of those most active had been arrested and loaded firearms had been recovered from them when arrested.

Beasley stated that a Mrs. Womack, who resides near Jonesboro City Hall, observed Cosetta Jackson leave his taxi near city hall during the period of police roadblocks on March 11, 1965 and walk toward the Negro section; he said she observed Jackson return to the taxi later carrying a rifle. Beasley stated that Jackson was arrested on March 15, 1965 for carrying a concealed weapon, and at that time there were recovered from him a .22 caliber automatic rifle and a four-barrel .22 caliber pistol, both loaded; recovered from him also at the time of arrest were two walkie talkie CB radios.

Beasley stated that Olin Satcher was arrested on March 11, 1965 for resisting an officer and carrying a concealed weapon, and at the time of arrest there was recovered from him a .22 caliber automatic rifle, loaded, which Satcher had been carrying in his car during the period of the demonstrations at Jackson High School (Negro) in Jonesboro.

James W. Dade, [redacted], retired teacher, and Mrs. Edward Farley, teacher at Hawk Elementary School, Jonesboro, member and chairwoman, respectively, of the Grievance Committee selected to represent the Negroes in connection with presentation of grievances to the Jackson Parish School Board relative to the b6 b7C

demonstrations at Jackson High School, advised on March 17, 1965 that Percy Lee Bradford and Earnest Thomas spoke out against the proposal of the school board that the students discontinue demonstrations and return to classes as a condition of the School Board's acceptance of the proposal to meet with the Negroes at Jackson High School on March 22, 1965. Mrs. Farley supported the effort to get the students to discontinue demonstrations on March 17, 1965 as a basis for the meeting with the School Board, but because in part, at least, of the influence of Bradford and Thomas, President and Vice President, respectively of DDJ the demonstrations continued.

The corporation charter records of the office of Jackson Parish Clerk of Court, Jonesboro, Louisiana, under registry file number 172923, contain a charter of Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc., Jonesboro, Louisiana, filed March 8, 1965 showing that this organization, as a corporation, was formed March 5, 1965 by notarial act before James Sharp, Jr., Notary, and Attorney, at Monroe, Louisiana. Following is a copy of this charter as filed with the Jackson Parish Clerk of Court, Jonesboro, Louisiana:

172923

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF OUACHITA

BE IT KNOWN, That on this the 5th day of the Month of March, in the Year of Our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Five:

BEFORE ME, a Notary Public, in and for this Parish and State, personally came and appeared the several parties of full age of majority whose signatures are subscribed, who declared in the presence of the undersigned competent witnesses, that availing themselves of the provisions of Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, Sections 12:101 - 12:155, they do hereby organize a nonprofit corporation as defined in Revised Statute 12:101 (8) under and in accordance with these articles of incorporation.

ARTICLE I. "NAME"

The name of this corporation is "Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc.".

ARTICLE II. "PURPOSES"

This corporation is organized for the following purposes and to carry on the following purposes: To instruct, train, teach and educate Citizens of the United States and especially minority groups in the fundamental principals of the republican form of government and our democratic way of life; to instruct, teach, train and educate said persons in the provisions of the constitution and laws of the United State and the State of Louisiana, as well as the constitution and laws of any other State wherein this corporation may operate; to instruct, teach, train and educate said persons in the use, value and purpose of the ballot and the right to vote; to instruct, teach, train and educate said persons as to the duties and responsibilities of good citizenship relative to the obligation and

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CLERK OF COURT
JAMES M. MARSHALL
PARISH OUACHITA

duties of the citizen to the community and the obligation and duties of the community to the citizen: To further instruct, teach, train and educate said persons in the value of economic security and in the effective use of their spending power; to inspire in said persons a sense of responsibility and to develop leadership. This corporation has for its further purpose, and is dedicated to, the defense of the civil r[illegible]ts, property rights and personal rights of said people and will defend said rights by any and all honorable and legal means to the end that justice may be obtained. This corporation may establish chapters and conduct its business at any place in this State and elsewhere as permitted by law.

ARTICLE III. "DURATION"

This corporation shall enjoy corporate existence for a period of ninety-nine (99) years from date hereof.

ARTICLE IV. "REGISTERED OFFICE"

The location and post office address of its registered office shall be: Amos Service Station, (rear), Peach Spring Road, Drawer B, Jonesboro, Louisiana.

ARTICLE V. "REGISTERED AGENTS"

The full names and post office addresses of its registered agents are:

1. Earnest Thomas, P. O. Box 472, Jonesboro, Louisiana.
2. Elmo Jacobs, P. O. Box 124, Jonesboro, Louisiana.

ARTICLE VI. "BASIS OF ORGANIZATION"

This corporation shall be organized without capital stock and membership shall be evidencedby certificates of membership. The membership shall be constituted and composed of all of the undersigned incorporators and all persons hereinafter who apply for membership and satisfactory show that they are dedicated to the proposition of protecting through any and all legal means those rights granted by appropriate law to all Citizens of the United States of America and particularly members of minority groups and

are accepted as members by a majority of the members of this corporation present and voting at a regular meeting.

ARTICLE VII. "BOARD OF DIRECTORS"

The affairs of this corporation shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of five (5) members of this corporation from the time of incorporation until said number is changed by an amendment to the article or by-laws of this corporation and the following shall constitute the first Board of Directors:

1. Percy Lee Bradford P. O. Box 95, Jonesboro, Louisiana
2. Earnest Thomas P. O. Box 492, Jonesboro, Louisiana
3. Charlie White P. O. Box 733, Jonesboro, Louisiana
4. Cosetta Jackson General Delivery, Jonesboro, Louisiana
5. Elmo Jacobs P. O. Box 124, Jonesboro, Louisiana

The qualification, term of office, manner of election, compensation, powers and duties of the directors, the time and place and manner of calling, giving notice and of conducting directors meetings and number of directors which shall constitute a quorum, shall be prescribed by the by-laws.

ARTICLE VII. "POWER AND CAPACITY"

This corporation shall have the capacity to act possessed by natural person and shall have authority to perform those acts which are necessary and proper to accomplish the purposes expressed or implied in these articles or that may be incidental thereto and shall have all the power, authority and capacity of a nonprofit corporation as provided for by Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, Title 12:101 - 12:155 without limiting said powers, this corporation shall have the power and authority to receive, hold and administer property in trust as provided by law, to sue and be sued in the corporate name, to make and use a corporate seal, to hold, purchase, lease, mortgage, sell and receive by donation or otherwise, real,

personal and mixed property, to borrow money, to issue, negotiate, sell and pledge evidences of indebtedness and to secure same by pledges, deeds of trust or mortgage, of both the whole or any part of the property of this corporation; and to receive, collect and pay out money for the accomplishment of its corporate purposes.

ARTICLE IX. "OFFICERS"

The Board of Directors shall elect the following officers: A President, who shall be chairman of the Board of Directors, a Vice-President, who shall be Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The board shall regulate and collect dues from all members according to its by-laws made for said purpose. The Board of Directors may create new offices and regulate the duties of the officers as it may deem advisable. The first officers are:

NAME	OFFICE
1. Percy Lee Bradford	President
2. Earnest Thomas	Vice-President
3. Charlie White	Secretary
4. Cosetta Jackson	Treasurer

ARTICLE X.

The Board of Directors shall have the power to make, amend and replace by-laws to govern this corporation provided they are in accordance with and do not conflict with these articles.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, said Incorporators have hereunto signed their names at Monroe, Louisiana, in the presence of Barbara L. Sharp and Geraldine Williams, legal and competent witnesses, and me, said Notary Public, on this the 5th day of March, in the Year of Our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Five.

WITNESSES:

Barbara L. Sharp

Geraldine Williams

Percy Lee Bradford
PERCY LEE BRADFORD

Earnest Thomas
EARNEST THOMAS

Elmo Jacabs
ELMO JACABS

Charlie White
CHARLIE WHITE

James Sharp Jr.
NOTARY PUBLIC

NO 157-3290

On March 24, 1965, HENRY COLLINS AMOS was contacted and interviewed regarding another matter at his office behind the Amos Gulf Service Station, Beach Springs Road, Jonesboro, Louisiana. Amos voluntarily furnished information that he is a member of Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc. (DDJ), Jonesboro, which he described as a civic organization dedicated to civic improvement in the Negro community and to protection of the civil rights of persons in the Negro community. Amos stated that DDJ is entirely non-violent, but that some of the members have firearms for self-defense and for protection against persons, possibly connected with the Ku Klux Klan, who might go to the Negro section of town to engage in violence. There was observed a double-barrel shotgun, a single-barrel shotgun, a .30 caliber rifle and a .22 caliber rifle all standing in the corner of the office used by Amos and also used as headquarters of DDJ. The .30 caliber rifle was observed to have the name Charlie White taped on it. During the conversation with Amos, it was observed that Elmo Jacobs walked into the office, and Amos handed him a loaded .45 caliber revolver in a leather holster from the desk drawer.

Amos stated that members of the DDJ do not engage in armed patrols, but that the stories of their armed patrols were given out to discourage klansmen and persons of that kind from going into the Negro section to cause trouble. He stated that there have been a number of crosses burned in the Negro section within the last year or two, and that one night in July, 1964, a motorcade of about 30 cars with persons wearing hoods and white robes drove through the Negro section of town, led by a police car of the Jonesboro Police Department.

Amos took from his desk a copy of the charter of DDJ, and he stated that the officers and members of the Board of Directors of the organization are responsible, civic-minded residents of Jonesboro. He stated that the organization has a very limited membership, although it had made claim of a very large membership in order to be more effective in discouraging persons from entering the Negro section for the purpose of causing trouble.

Amos stated that he, Elmo Jacobs, Casetta Jackson, and Earnest Thomas, as representatives of DDJ, had a meeting with Mayor L. O. Tait and Chief of Police Adrian G. Peevy,

Jonesboro, Louisiana, on the morning of March 24, 1965, and presented to them a plan for civil improvement of the Negro section of Jonesboro, including a clean-up drive and a plan for street signs and house numbers throughout the Negro section.

Amos stated that DDJ definitely does not advocate violence and that the use of firearms would be approved only for self-defense or for use to prevent klansmen or organized groups from entering the Negro section to beat up a resident of the area or to engage in acts of violence against a resident of the area. Amos stated that he felt that leaders of DDJ would be glad to furnish information to the FBI about the DDJ.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of theFBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

For Informational Purposes Only

The originals removed from this file and replaced with duplicate copies of the original were accessioned to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) pursuant to the JFK Records Collection Act of 1992. Provision of the JFK Act allowed for certain information to be postponed from public release until the year 2017; therefore, the pages have NOT necessarily been released for public review in their entirety.

Under the JFK Act, originals to all material deemed assassination records must be accesssioned to NARA regardless of whether the material is open in full or released with information postponed. Therefore, any documents or pages from FBI files accessioned to NARA pursuant to the JFK Act are no longer considered the possession of the FBI. The duplicate pages have been inserted strictly for research purposes.

The copies contained herein do not necessarily show the most up-to-date classification.

To attain a copy of the publicly released version of any materials maintained in the JFK Collection at the NARA facility in College Park, MD, you may contact the JFK Access Staff, at 301/713-6620.

The following materials were removed from this file and are maintained in the JFK Collection at NARA:

File & Serial Number	JFK Subject Identifier (for NARA purposes)
157-2466-14	William J. Waldman

For Informational Purposes Only

XXXXXXXX
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XXXXXXXX

William A. Waldman

The document listed below was processed

as a see reference for the above listed subject.

151-2466-14

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REC-98 157-2466-15

June 22, 1965

Mr. Earl H. Williams
720 Fourth Street
West Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Mr. Williams:

Your letter of June 16th has been received, and it was good to hear from you. Your best wishes and the confidence in the work being handled by the Bureau expressed in your letter are also deeply appreciated.

Thank you for forwarding the newspaper clippings. Your observations are being made a matter of record.

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

JUN 22 10 51 AM '65
REC'D-READING ROOM
F B I

NOTE: Correspondent is on the Special Correspondents' List. He EOD 3-19-34 and retired 11-30-58. His file is satisfactory. (67-32303)
DCL/ufp The Deacons for Defense and Justice are subject of Bufile 157-2466.
(3)

MAILED 25
JUN 22 1965
COMM-FBI

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gal/ffk

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
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Trotter
Tele. Room
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Gandy

70 JUL 13 1965

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

TRUE COPY

720 - 4th Street
West Des Moines, Iowa
June 16, 1965.

3-1

Dear Mr. Hoover:

Enclosed are some clippings taken from the Des Moines Sunday Register, Des Moines, Iowa, relating to the Deacons, an organization headed up by one Ernest Thomas, Jonesboro, Louisiana.

This organization seems to be patterned after all similar groups such as Minutemen, KKK and similar groups which parade under the guise of being a defensive organizations. It is a Negro organization and purports to take the law into its own hand rather than permit local, state and federal officials and courts to handle this. Armed with high powered weapons, some of which have great fire power, such groups unless kept under rigid surveillance and control could lead to bloodshed and anarchy.

It is also surprising the apparent ease with which these people obtained these weapons when they are denied to the average citizen.

Some of my friends are deeply disturbed by this organization as well as other similar armed mobs. Hence the reason for this letter.

I am not interested in what has been found out about this group but only if it has come to your attention and is receiving investigative attention.

Please be advised your support out this way is very strong and unwavering. People still have the greatest confidence in the FBI and in these troublesome times provides an anchor to which people can tie.

Wishing you many more years of continued success.

Very truly yours,

Earl H. Williams
X Agent 34-58

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-82 BY

ENCLOSURE

DEC 98 157-2466-15

8 JUN 23 1965

PERS. REC. UNIT

XEROX
JUL 7 1965

720 - 4th Street
West Des Moines, Iowa

June 16, 1965.

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Enclosed are some clippings taken from the Des Moines Sunday Register, Des Moines, Iowa, relating to the Deacons, an organization headed up by one Ernest Thomas, Jonesboro, Louisiana.

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE [illegible]

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Earl H. Williams

Ex Agent '34-58

Des Moines Sunday Register, June 6, 1965

ARMED DIXIE NEGRO LEAGUE IS SPREADING

Page 1.

50 Chapters Now In 3 States

By Roy Reed
© New York Times News Service

BOGALUSA, LA.—An armed league of Negroes, formed to defend Negroes against white terrorism, is spreading across the South.

The Deacons for Defense and Justice, born last summer in northern Louisiana, has crossed the Mississippi River to Mississippi and Alabama and plans to move into every Southern state.

The Deacons have guns and they have shown they are willing to use them. Twice in Louisiana they have opened fire on harassing whites.

The organization raises a hard question for advocates of non-violence. Should a civil rights organization committed to non-violence align itself with the Deacons and accept its services, as one organization has done, at least tacitly if not by design?

Doubt Law

The Deacons are causing concern among law enforcement authorities in Louisiana. The organization was formed largely out of a belief that Negroes could not expect impartial treatment from white lawmen and that, if they were to be defended against church burnings, bombings, beatings, killings and terrorism, they would have to do it themselves.

Earnest Thomas of Jonesboro, La., the 32-year-old vice-president and organizer of the Deacons, said Friday that the organization had 50 to 55 chapters in various stages of organization in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

He declined to disclose the number of members. Outsiders have guessed from 5,000 to 15,000, he said, but he would not indicate that either figure was correct.

The main strength is in Louisiana. The incursions across the Mississippi appear to be tentative and exploratory, with considerable organizational work still to be done.

Thomas said the Deacons could spread to every Southern state in six or seven months, "with hard work."

Visits Members

Thomas visited the Deacons in Bogalusa Friday in the wake

DEACONS—
Continued on Page Eight

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 pal/lr

157-2466-15

ENCLOSURE

Des Moines Sunday Register
June 6, 1965 8-G
General Section

ARMED WITH RIFLES, PISTOLS

DEACONS—

Continued from Page One

of the murder of O'Neal Moore, one of Washington Parish's first Negro deputy sheriffs. Many Deacon chapters are in towns that have CORE staffers at work.

Richard Haley of New Orleans, the southern director of the Congress of Racial Equality, said the connection between the two organizations began accidentally at Jonesboro when CORE discovered that its workers were safer with the Deacons around.

Thomas said the Deacons were armed with rifles and pistols.

"Everybody owns his own piece," he said. The organization provides ammunition, which it buys in quantity for savings.

He hopes to standardize weapons to effect further savings. He favors the 30-caliber, Army carbine and the 38-caliber pistol. Some members have automatic carbines that will fire 30 rounds like a machine gun. Most now use shotguns, Thomas said.

Thomas and Haley share a concern that the Deacons may be painted as aggressive and trigger-happy. They were organized strictly for defense, and they are highly disciplined, Thomas said.

One of their main jobs is to protect civil rights workers and volunteers participating in civil rights activities. A person knowingly exposes himself to white violence when he walks a picket line. But when he goes to bed at night he is entitled to rest without worry, and that's where the Deacons come in, Thomas said.

Started in March

With Percy Lee Bradford of Jonesboro as president, the Deacons were incorporated in March as a non-profit corporation in Louisiana.

The idea started last summer in Jonesboro after a Ku Klux Klan parade through a Negro street, Thomas said. He said the Klan rode through the street throwing out leaflets with a Jonesboro police escort.

"We decided that if the power structure would do that for the Klan, then we had better do something for ourselves," he said.

$25,000 AWARD

BOGALUSA, LA. (AP)—Gov. John J. McKeithen, in a tough mood over racial troubles here, offered a $25,000 cash reward Saturday to help crack the ambush slaying of a Negro deputy.

McKeithen, after meeting with the ranking investigators in the slaying of Washington Parish Deputy O'Neal Moore, met with

FD-36 (Rev. 12-13-56)

(U)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ FBI

Date: 6/10/65

Transmit the following in ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE (Type in plain text or code)

DECLASSIFIED BY SP8 BJ/CAL ON 1-27-91

Via AIRTEL (Priority or Method of Mailing)

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP/BJ/CAL 7-16-85
REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2. 4. 2 2
DATE OF REVIEW 6-10-85

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (~~100-442684~~)

FROM: SAC, DETROIT (157-768) (P)

REVOLUTIONARY ACTION MOVEMENT
IS - RAM
(OO: CHICAGO)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE & JUSTICE

Re Detroit airtel with LHM to the Bureau, dated 6/3/65.

Enclosed for the Bureau are nine copies of an LHM concerning captioned matter. One copy of the LHM being furnished G-2 and two copies of the LHM being furnished U.S. Secret Service, both Detroit, Mich. Two copies are also being furnished Chicago which is office of origin in this matter and two copies are being furnished New Orleans which has an apparent interest in view of mention of "The Deacons for Defense and Justice", which reportedly originated in the State of Louisiana.

The contents of the LHM have been made available to the Detroit Police Department and the Michigan State Police. The LHM is being classified ~~confidential~~ since information contained therein could reasonably result in the identification of informants of continuing value and thereby compromise the future effectiveness thereof.

157-2466-

NOT RECORDED
176 JUN 22 1965

3 - Bureau (Enc. 9) (RM)
2 - Chicago (Enc. 2) (RM)
2 - New Orleans (Enc. 2) ~~(RM)~~
4 - Detroit
(1 - 157-835 FWHC)
(1 - 157-706 POSSIBLE RACIAL VIOLENCE)

FJP/emo
(11)

1cc & cc LHM
808 RB

11 JUN 12 1965

Approved: Per

Special Agent in Charge

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES AND FIELD OFFICES NOTIFIED BY LETTER DATED

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SS
DATE FORW: 6-15-65
HOW FORW: AIRTEL
BY:

DECLASSIFIED CRD 1-27-91

ENCLOSURE

ORIGINAL FILED IN 100-442684-15

T. C. Wick
105
51 JUN 30 1965

Bates

CONFIDENTIAL

Source number one is [redacted]. Source number two is [redacted]. Source number three is [redacted] Detroit Police Department. (X) b7D

This matter is being followed closely by the Detroit Office and the Bureau will be advised of pertinent developments.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

Detroit, Michigan
June 10, 1965

DECLASSIFIED BY SP8 BTJ/CAC ON 1-24-91

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM)

Reference is made to Detroit memorandum dated June 3, 1965, captioned as above.

On June 7, 1965, source number one, who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised that a meeting of the Fox and Wolf Hunt Club (FWHC) was held on June 6, 1965, in a small office of Richard B. Henry, located at 3341 Livernois, Detroit, Michigan. (X) (U)

Source identified the following individuals as being among some of those in attendance at this meeting:

Richard Henry,

Virgil Hobbs,

Charles Simmons,

Marshall Williams,

General Baker,

Vales Crossley,

Max Henderson,

Gretta Bridges. (X) (U)

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES AND FIELD OFFICES ADVISED OF FOLLOWING SEIP(S) OF Classification DATE 2/6-80 SP1 8-2/8

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Source advised that this meeting was called to order by the FWHC President, Richard B. Henry, and the (X) (U)

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP1 gsb 1 fk 7-16-80
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2.04.2, B
DATE OF REVIEW 6-10-85

157-2466-

CONFIDENTIAL

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

ENCLOSURE

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement
(RAM)

FWHC Treasurer, General Baker, gave his report on the status of the club bank account and he collected the dues for the month of June. (X)

A report was then given by Max Henderson on the prospective purchase of shooting jackets and jacket arm patches and all present voted unanimously for the purchase of the jackets and the patches. (X)

According to source number one, Richard Henry showed those present a newspaper clipping which he stated he had taken from the Sunday edition of June 6, 1965, of the "Detroit Free Press", a newspaper published daily in Detroit. The article is captioned, "Southern Negroes Form Armed League Against Terrorists" and reads as follows: (X)

> "Bogalusa, La. - An armed league of Negroes, formed for defense against white terrorism, is spreading across the South.
>
> "The Deacons for Defense and Justice, born last summer in northern Louisiana, has crossed the Mississippi River into Mississippi and Alabama and plan to move into every Southern state.
>
> "The Deacons have guns and they have shown they are willing to use them. Twice in Louisiana they have opened fire on harassing whites.
>
> "The organization raises a hard question for advocates of nonviolence. Should a civil rights organization committed to nonviolence align itself with the Deacons and accept its services, as one organization has done, at least tacitly if not by design?

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement
(RAM)

"The Deacons are causing concern among law enforcement authorities in Louisiana.

"The organization was formed largely out of a belief that Negroes could not ex-impartial treatment from white lawmen and that, if they were to be defended against church burnings, bombings, beatings, killings have to do it themselves.

"Ernest Thomas of Jonesboro, La., 32, the vice president and full-time organizer of the Deacons, said that the organization had 50 to 55 chapters in various stages of organization in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

"He declined to disclose the number of members. Outsiders have guessed from 5,000 to 15,000, he said, but he would not indicate that either figure was correct. The membership probably is not large.

* * *

"The main strength is in Louisiana. The incursions across the Mississippi appear to be tentative and exploratory.

"Thomas visited the Deacons in Bogalusa Friday in the wake of the murder of O'Neal Moore, one of Washington Parish's first Negro deputy sheriffs. He was interviewed at the home of Robert Hicks, a Bogalusa Negro leader whose home has become the headquarters of the Bogalusa civil rights movement.

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement
(RAM)

"Richard Haley of New Orleans, the Southern Director of the Congress of Racial Equality, participated in the interview. CORE and the Deacons are on friendly terms. Many Deacon chapters are in towns that have CORE staffers at work.

"Haley said the connection between the two organizations began accidentally at Jonesboro when CORE discovered that its workers were safer with the Deacons around.

* * *

"Thomas said the Deacons were armed with rifles and pistols.

"'Everybody owns his own piece', he said. The organization provides ammunition, which it buys in quantity for savings.

"Thomas hopes to standardize weapons to effect further savings. He favors the 30 - caliber Army carbine and the 38 - caliber pistol. Some members have automatic carbines that will fire 30 rounds like a machinegun. Most now use shotguns, Thomas said.

"Thomas and Haley share a concern that the Deacons may be painted as aggressive and trigger happy. They were organized strictly for defense and they are highly disciplined, Thomas said.

"One of their main jobs is to protect civil rights workers and

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement
(RAM)

"volunteers participating civil rights activities. A person knowingly exposes himself to white violence when he walks a picket line. But when at night he is entitled to rest without worry, and that's where the Deacons come in, Thomas said.

"With Percy Lee Bradford of Jonesboro as president, the Deacons were incorporated in March as a non-profit corporation in Louisiana."

According to source number one, Henry told those present that they should think about possibly going to Louisiana and he mentioned it might be a good idea for two members of the FWHC to go to Louisiana to see what this group called "The Deacons" is all about.

Henry said he might try to telephonically contact either Percy Lee Bradford, the President of "The Deacons" or Ernest Thomas, Vice-President of "The Deacons".

Henry also suggested that the FWHC members should think about possibly having a rally in Detroit with the idea of raising funds in order to send the delegates to Louisiana to work along with "The Deacons".

Source number one advised that after the FWHC meeting ended, the various members present proceeded to the Hickory Ridge Rifle Range located at 23 Mile Road and Dequindre, outside of the immediate Detroit area, where they engaged in target practice.

On June 7, 1965, source number two and source number three, both of whom have furnished reliable information in the past, corroborated the information furnished by source number one as set out above concerning the meeting of the FWHC held on June 6, 1965.

Re: Revolutionary Action Movement
(RAM)

Source number three also advised that three of the individuals in attendance at this FWHC meeting, namely General Baker, Charles Simmons and Marshall Williams, are also local RAM members.

A characterization of RAM is contained in the appendix hereto.

All unidentified sources utilized in the appendix have furnished reliable information in the past.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

1

APPENDIX

REVOLUTIONARY ACTION MOVEMENT (RAM)

On November 3, 1964, a source made available a document entitled, "The Revolutionary Action Movement Manifesto", the document having been obtained by the source from an individual known to be a member of RAM.

This document stated, in part, that RAM was officially organized in the Winter of 1963, by Afro-Americans who support the revolutionary objectives of ROBERT F. WILLIAMS, now residing in Cuba, and his concept of organized violence to achieve the liberation of the Afro-American people in the United States. This Manifesto reflected that RAM had oriented its program to one of education and political revolution and the organization of a "black" political party with revolutionary objectives, having recognized the need for a "black revolution" that could and would seize power. RAM philosophy is described in this document as one of revolutionary nationalism, that is, one involving the struggles of the non-white races of the world against exploitation and enslavement by the white capitalist and imperialist nations.

Regarding WILLIAMS, above, it should be noted that on August 28, 1961, a Federal warrant was issued at Charlotte, North Carolina, charging him with Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution for the Crime of Kidnapping. Subsequent to the issuance of this warrant, WILLIAMS fled the United States to Cuba, where he now publishes a monthly newsletter entitled "The Crusader" from Havana.

On November 16, 1965, a second source advised that he learned recently from a RAM member that the organization was begun in Detroit, Michigan, largely under the impetus of DON FREEMAN, Cleveland, Ohio, described as the "Father" of RAM and referred to as RAM's "Black Stalin". FREEMAN now serves as RAM Chairman, with MAXWELL STANFORD, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, serving RAM as Field Chairman. This second source advised that there is no formal headquarters, as such, for RAM at present, but that headquarters are, in effect, with FREEMAN since he plays a dominant role in the leadership and directs the policies and activities of the organization.

2

This second source, in September, 1964, advised that RAM is dedicated to the overthrow of the capitalist system in the United States, by violence if necessary, and to its replacement by a socialistic system oriented toward the Chinese Communist interpretation of Marxism-Leninism. RAM is entirely non-white in membership, clandestine in nature, and owes its primary allegiance to the "Bandung World", that is, the non-white races of the world, rather than to any national entity, as such.

To date, according to the second source, in November, 1964, RAM has organized units and membership in several of the larger cities in the United States east of the Mississippi River, and the organization is currently active, attempting to recruit new members and expand its sphere of influence.

DECLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY DERIVED FROM:
FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE
DATE 08-24-2018 BY: [redacted]

b6
b7C

FBI

Date: 6/15/65

Transmit the following in CONFIDENTIAL (U)
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIR MAIL - REGISTERED
(Priority)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, LOS ANGELES (157-1184)(P)

RE: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
aka "The Deacons;"
CHARLES SIMS, Spokesman
RACIAL MATTERS
OO: New Orleans

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP/86 1-4-7 1-6-80
REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2, 4, 2
DATE OF REVIEW 6-15-85

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight (8) copies of a letterhead memorandum (LHM) setting out observations of SA WILLIAM N. HEARD who viewed Los Angeles TV Channel 11, Sunday night, 6/13/65 observing the "LOUIS LOMAX Show." CHARLES SIMS from Bogalusa, Louisiana, who claimed to be the spokesman for "The Deacons" was the featured guest. Xerox copies of two newspaper articles appearing in the "Los Angeles Times" dated 6/13 and 14/65 were made a part of this LHM. It is noted that one newspaper article reported that "The Deacons" had machine guns and other weapons in their private arsenal. Three copies of the LHM are enclosed for New Orleans. Locally, copies of the LHM are being sent to Region II, 115th INTC, Pasadena; Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Unit, Los Angeles and Secret Service, Los Angeles.

[redacted] advised SA WILLIAM N. HEARD orally on (U) b7D
6/14/65 that SIMS, on that date, had registered at the Sahran Motor Hotel, Room 216, 7212 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles.

ENCLOSURE

3 - Bureau (Encls. 8)
2 - New Orleans (Encls. 3)(AM-REGISTERED)
3 - Los Angeles
(1 - [redacted]) (U) b7D

MIB:bjs
(8)

12 JUN 17 1965

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI; SEC. SER.;
DEPT: ISD, CRD, RAO
DATE FORW: 6-18-65
HOW FORW: R/S
BY: J E Smith

1cc & cc LHM
808 RB

Approved: Sent M Per
Special Agent in Charge

53 JUN 29 1965

CONFIDENTIAL (U)

INT. SEC.

CONFIDENTIAL (U)

For the information of New Orleans, it is being noted that [redacted] also advised that prior to 3 p.m., 6/14/65, SIMS telephoned for ROBERT YOUNG in Bogalusa, Louisiana at telephone 504RE2-4434 and 504RE5-6096 reaching YOUNG at the latter number and talking to him for 12 minutes. Also SIMS dialed station to station to Bogalusa to 504-RE 5-6459 and talked for four minutes. (U) b7D

It is being noted that subsequent to the appearance of SIMS on the foregoing described TV program, anonymous telephone protests were received at the Los Angeles Office complaining as to the aims and arms of SIMS and "The Deacons" which indicated to them the formation of a "Negro KKK."

LEAD

LOS ANGELES

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. Will report the departure of SIMS from Los Angeles.

CONFIDENTIAL (U)
[illegible] (U)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

Los Angeles, California
June 15, 1965

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE,
also known as "The Deacons;"
CHARLES SIMS, Spokesman
RACIAL MATTERS

B. APPROX. 1914

A Special Agent of the FBI viewed the "Louis Lomax TV Show," Channel 11, Los Angeles, California, beginning 11 p.m., Sunday night, June 13, 1965. Charles Sims, the featured guest, described himself as "The Man" in "The Deacons" in Bogalusa, Louisiana, saying he was 41 years old, a native of Bogalusa, Louisiana, had finished one year of high school, had served four years and five months in the U. S. Army attaining the rank of Technical Sergeant. He had sold industrial insurance prior to becoming associated with "The Deacons" and currently is working as an underwriter for a builders' insurance group.

Sims was observed to be a male, Negro, graying at the temples, balding on the top of his head and a scar was noticed in the middle of his chin. He appeared to be about 5'10" and of medium build.

Sims stated that "The Deacons" were organized about six months ago and that now there are from 50 to 60 chapters in three or four states. He declined to give the total numerical membership. He claimed "The Deacons" were organized for the purpose of protecting civil rights workers who could not obtain protection from local law enforcement authorities.

Sims stated that "The Deacons" are armed and are buying more arms with which to defend themselves. He admitted he is aware that it is not legal for them to carry weapons, but that he "would rather be caught with a weapon than without one in Bogalusa."

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

ENCLOSURE
157-2466-16

He voiced the opinion that in the event of "trouble" that "blood would be flowing down the streets like water." He claimed he could rally 100 armed men within fifteen minutes notice and had done so previously. He claimed he had used his gun twice but did not elaborate.

Any suggestions made to this program while Sims was being interviewed which favored "non-violence" were unacceptable to Sims and to the audience who applauded Sims wildly with Lomax commending Sims.

At the conclusion of the program, Lomax stated Sims would spend the next few days in Los Angeles meeting with various civil rights organizations.

Another source advised that on June 14, 1965, Sims registered at the Sahran Motor Hotel, Room 216, 7212 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles.

A newspaper article entitled "Negro 'Deacons' Claim They Have Machine Guns, Grenades for 'War'", and dated June 13, 1965 appeared in the "Los Angeles Times," "Exclusive to The Times from a Staff Writer," was copied and is a part of the letterhead memorandum.

A second newspaper article entitled "Deacons Chief Defends Aims on Visit to L.A." appeared in the "Los Angeles Times" dated June 14, 1965 which was the results of an interview with Sims by Times Staff Writer Paul Weeks, also was copied and made a part of this letterhead memorandum.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FD-350 (Rev. 7-18-63)

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Negro 'Deacons' Claim They Have Machine Guns, Grenades for 'War'

Exclusive to The Times from a Staff Writer

BOGALUSA, La.—At two secret meetings, both attended by representatives of the Congress of Racial Equality, the Deacons for Defense and Justice claimed to have machine guns and grenades for use in racial warfare.

The Los Angeles Times learned that the Bogalusa chapter of the armed Negro vigilante group discussed the use of those and other military-type weapons at its organizational meeting last Feb. 21 and again at a meeting the following day.

The Deacons insist their purpose is only defensive. However, at both February meetings they talked of preventing whites from going into Negro residential areas at night.

They also proposed making "sure" Negroes get fair trials and having armed confrontations with policemen when Negroes are arrested.

The rising militancy of the Deacons and the expansion of the movement is a new element in the civil rights struggle which federal and state officials view with increasing concern.

In Bogalusa a veteran police officer said:

"They are flirting with danger. The other night there was a little commotion and rumors of trouble in the colored community. The Deacons hopped in their cars and went zipping around the streets.

"If they keep that up they are bound to run into trouble."

CORE has co-operated with the Deacons in civil rights work in Bogalusa and Jonesboro. The secret order of Deacons was organized in Jonesboro last summer, reportedly with the aid of CORE members, to protect Negroes and civil rights workers from armed racists.

Earnest Thomas, 32, of Jonesboro, an official and full-time organizer of the Deacons, has told newsmen that there are now 50 to 55 chapters in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. Fund-raising units are being established in San Francisco, New York and other large cities, he said.

Thomas and another official of the parent group, Frederick Douglas Kirkpatrick, a high school coach in Jonesboro, came to Bogalusa in February to organize the local chapter.

With them were two white CORE workers—Steve Mil-

Please Turn to Pg. 16, Col. 1

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

A-1 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif

Date: 6/13/65
Edition: Final
Author:
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title: Deacons For Defense & JUSTICE,
Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: Los Angeles

☐ Being Investigated

SURVEYS DAMAGE—Robert Hicks, vice president of Bogalusa Voters League, surveys damage to car parked in front of his house which he said was fired into from passing auto. He returned gunfire.
(A) Wirephoto

ler, 19, of San Francisco, a student of Antioch College in Ohio, and William Yates, 36, of Boston, a former Cornell English professor.

(Less than three weeks before the organizational meeting, Miller and Yates reported they were shot at and beaten by racists in Bogalusa. On the night of April 7 Yates was staying at the home of Deacon Robert Hicks when Hicks fired back at whites who shot at his home.)

Combat 'Inevitable'

At the organizational meeting, Kirkpatrick discussed racial combat "as though it is inevitable, The Times learned.

"It takes violent blacks to combat these violent whites," he declared. "It takes non-violent whites and non-violent Negroes to sit down and bargain whenever the thing is over—and iron it out. I ain't about to.

"We're gonna be ready for 'em. We're gonna have to be ready to survive."

About 15 persons attended the organizational meeting at a Negro union hall here Feb. 21. They included Charles Sims, an ex-cab driver with a police record of assaults and concealed weapons, who was elected chapter president; A. Z. Young, president of the Bogalusa Civic and Voters League, elected vice president, and Robert Hicks, another Voters League official.

Both Sims and Hicks refused to tell a Times reporter whether Bogalusa Deacons are armed with machine guns and other military-type weapons.

"You know better than to ask me questions like that," said Sims.

Hicks said, "You don't tell your opponents what you're doing in any kind of conflict."

Powerful Weapons Urged

Kirkpatrick warned the new Deacons against "the tendency to buy something cheap, like a little ole .22-caliber rifle." He said, "That's no weapon—you need high-powered rifles."

"If you gonna use a pistol," he said, "use a .38. A shotgun is good to have for close-distance firing."

Deacons standardized their weapons, he said, making it practical to buy ammunition by the case.

"If you got only three or four bullets," he said, "you're out of the fight before it starts. Keep plenty of ammo at your house, in your car wherever you are. Be ready. I carry with me most all the time a hundred rounds."

Thomas interjected, "We have contacts in Chicago and Houston for automatic weapons—for .50-caliber and .30-caliber."

Someone asked, "What's that, machine guns?"

"Yeah—and we got grenades too," Thomas said. "We want to be ready if they want to be violent."

Radio Communications

Thomas explained that Deacons pay $10 initiation fees and $2 a month dues to their local chapters, which in turn pay the parent organization $100, plus 10% of dues. In return, he said, the parent group helps equip local chapters with two-way radio equipment.

The same week the Bogalusa chapter was formed, other Louisiana units were being established in Baton Rouge, New Iberia and Plaquemine.

Thomas told the Bogalusa group that Deacons chapters have inter-city radio communications so they can call for reinforcements in case of emergencies.

The use of walkie-talkies for patrol work was described by Yates and Miller, the CORE workers.

Kirkpatrick said Deacons would not "protect the man who is in the wrong," but would want to "check things out and make sure he gets a fair trial."

"The whites will pester you," commented one Deacon, "but when they see the hardware, they will take cover."

400 Attend Meeting

The mass meeting the following day was attended by about 400 persons. The grounds around the union hall were heavily patrolled by Deacons. No newsmen were present.

The formation of the Bogalusa chapter was announced by Hicks, who said that CORE had brought two officials of the Deacons from Jonesboro to organize the unit.

Hicks said the Bogalusa chapter would be "the same as in Jonesboro. They got radios, walkie-talkies, grenades, gas bombs, M-1 rifles. They set up a patrol system for the Negro community."

With the Deacons patrolling, Hicks said, "No white person will be allowed in a Negro area at night—salesmen or anybody." Thunderous applause and cheers greeted that remark.

Plan Regular Patrols

Hicks said, "We're gonna patrol. And, like policemen who are running you down and say, 'You speedin',' then we pull up to them and say, 'What's the matter,' and the policeman say, 'He's speedin'.'

"And we say, 'We didn't see him speed,' and when the policemen see we armed just like they is—a white man's just like anybody else — they gonna let you go when they see you gonna attack them back."

The total strength of the Deacons is kept secret by the organization, but outside estimates have ranged from 5,000 to 15,000.

Hicks has estimated the number of Deacons here at 175 to 200. He said about 75% of them are veterans of the armed services and several are experts in the use of military weapons.

Bogalusa Police Chief Klaxton Knight says the Deacons increase the danger of racial explosion.

"My men are watching them closely," he said. "If one of them makes the wrong move he's gonna get his head blown off."

Sims prepared Saturday to leave for Los Angeles where he will be interviewed on a television program.

"I'd like to start a chapter of the Deacons in Los Angeles," he said. "Man, there's police brutality and people with that white supremacy stuff everywhere."

But Hicks said he does not see any need for a Los Angeles chapter.

"They got problems out there just like everywhere else," Hicks said, "but nobody's shooting at anybody in Los Angeles."

FD-350 (Rev. 7-16-63)

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Deacons Chief Defends Aims on Visit to L.A.

Use of Arms Necessary Because of Lack of Justice for Negro in South, He Says

BY PAUL WEEKS
Times Staff Writer

He sat immaculate in a gray business suit, white shirt and plain tie, sipping black coffee in a fashionable hotel bar on the Sunset Strip. It was mid-morning.

At 41, he is balding. His black face is set off with a trim mustache. He lit one king-sized cigaret after another.

He called the bartender "Carlyle" because that's what the few others present called him. And the bartender called him "Mr. Sims" as the bartender used "Mister" with the others.

"Mr. Sims" is Charles Sims, insurance man, and he might have been any other Negro insurance man visiting in Los Angeles.

From Bogalusa

But he is Charles Sims, president of the Bogalusa (La.) chapter of the Deacons of Defense and Justice, which reportedly has amassed machine guns and grenades and rifles for any eventuality in the southern racial confrontation.

Once his reserve with strangers was broken, Sims smiled easily and admitted it was the first time he'd had a tie on in three months.

"Sometimes," he said, "I've slept with my clothes on for weeks at a time — and sometimes I didn't even take my shoes off."

Noncommittal on the bit about the heavy artillery, Sims admitted the Deacons bear arms in violation of the state concealed weapons law.

Charles Sims
Times photo

Choice Taken

"I would rather be caught in Bogalusa," he said, "with concealed weapons than without them."

The Deacons' arms, he insisted, are defensive—not retaliatory — for he believes southern law enforcement and justice for the Negro are nonexistent.

But federal and state authorities are worried. The Deacons, they say, are playing with matches in a powder magazine. Regardless of his words, how can Sims or his associate leaders ward off explosion when mob passion flares?

"I know every man in the Deacons in Bogalusa. It's a small (pop. 5,000) town. Neither the Communists nor the FBI could get in. And I'm no Communist. The members respect the leadership. That's good enough."

View Differs

To the law, Sims' assurance of organizational discipline is a fraying thread. He sees it as a steel chain one minute—but then:

"One time the police went into a picket line of our people and they pulled up young girls' dresses with nightsticks and they put lighted cigarets on their straw 'freedom' hats. I didn't know what was going to happen."

The Deacons' leadership promptly met at Sims' house.

"I took out my gun and put it on the table. I told everybody, 'Put them down there.' They put their guns down. We went down to that picket line and we joined it. There was no more trouble."

While he side-stepped the direct question as to whether the Deacons have machine guns and grenades, he said, regarding how they could possibly be conceived to be "defensive:"

"I saw all the blood and combat I ever want to see in the second World War. I saw innocent people killed, too. I don't want to see no more combat if I can get around it. But if ever there is a line coming at us with little or big weapons, I want to be ready."

But of more immediacy, he said civil rights workers —white or black—couldn't enter Bogalusa without the Deacons' armed cover. "We've protected more white men in Bogalusa than we ever protected colored."

Reviews Life

"But let's go back. I took what I wanted a long time. My folks could of sent me to any school I wanted. I didn't want that.

"I got in the infantry. I moved around. I saw things I never thought about in Bogalusa. I went to the library

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)
Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.
Part 1, page 25

Date: 6/14/65
Edition:
Author:
Editor: NICK B. WILLIAMS
Title:

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: LA

☐ Being Investigated

and I studied. I went to NCO school and came out a sergeant.

"One day in the Army I see a corporal who was a policeman in Bogalusa. He sees me in integrated places and all that. He was a die-hard. He got out of the service first. He sees me back in Bogalusa—me still in uniform.

"First thing he says, 'Remember, you're not in the Army now.' I made up my mind then not to be pushed around."

Sims has had a gun from that day to this.

On Dec. 6, 1959, a woman shot him and he almost died.

"I told my mother they got this woman in jail who shot me. I told her I was going to hit that women. The only defense she had against me was a weapon. I said, 'If I die, don't you prosecute.'

"And when I got well, the district attorney says, 'You prosecute.' And I says, 'You know I can't read or write. Who going to sign?' (I write better left-handed than he write).

"I was confined to bed for 40 days and look up to the top of the house. You live your life over like that. I never took time out before to sit down and listen to my own thoughts."

Reconciliation Told

The woman who shot him "is my girl right now, and I don't plan to swap her for nobody."

Long after the shooting, the Saturday night brawler "saw the police on TV dragging a woman like she was a piece of wood," and shortly he was in the Bogalusa Civic and Voters League and then the Deacons.

"The mayor invite CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) in for a test of integration in public places. They integrate for the test—they reject us after the test is over."

Sims' elbow, fascinated, sat author-commentator Louis Lomax, who invited Sims here to be dissected on Lomax' Sunday night TV show.

Anticipates Interview

"He say on the phone he going to take me apart with questions," Sims laughed. "I don't know then if he white or black—but the way he say it, I trust him—and I don't answer questions I don't want to."

One last question: Did Sims want to organize a Deacons chapter in Los Angeles?

He paused. He smiled.

"I hadn't thought about it." He had thought coming here might raise money for the Deacons and he hadn't given much thought to whether his appearance here might arouse more hatred and terror than money.

"You might have need for them here. I know Bogalusa. I don't know Los Angeles."

(A day earlier, Sims told a Times reporter in Bogalusa he would like to start a chapter in Los Angeles, adding, "Man, there's police brutality and people with that white supremacy stuff everywhere.")

DECLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY DERIVED FROM:
FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE
DATE 08-24-2018 BY [redacted]

b6
b7C

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (U)

F B I

Date: 6/21/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIR MAIL - REGISTERED
(Priority)

TO DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM SAC, LOS ANGELES (157-1184)(RUC)

RE DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE,
aka. "The Deacons";
CHARLES SIMS, Spokesman
RACIAL MATTERS
OO: New Orleans

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Re Los Angeles airtel to Bureau, 6/15/65.

[redacted] on 6/16/65 orally advised SA WILLIAM N. HEARD that SIMS checked out of his hotel at 7212 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, on 6/15/65 after being interviewed by officers of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and that the present whereabouts of SIMS was unknown to informant. (U) b7D

[redacted] on 6/21/65 orally advised SA MARSHALL I. BARNES that SIMS left Los Angeles on 6/15/65 to return to Bogalusa, Louisiana, means of transportation unknown. This informant added that the LAPD interview was non-productive of new or pertinent information not previously furnished by reairtel. (U) b7D

3 - Bureau (RM)
2 - New Orleans (RM)(AM)
1 - Los Angeles

157-1466-17

REC-70

MIB/jlm
(6)

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP1 gal/jw 7-16-80
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2, 4.2 2
DATE OF REVIEW 6-21-85

EX-109

10 JUN 26 1965

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (U)

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Agent in Charge

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

FBI

Date: 6/24/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority)

REC-72

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-New) (P)

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
HOMER, LOUISIANA, CHAPTER
RM

Enclosed herewith for the Bureau are original and eight copies of a letterhead memorandum setting forth information concerning captioned organization. Copies of this memorandum are being disseminated to ICG and Secret Service.

3 - Bureau (Enc. 9)
2 - New Orleans (157-New)

WPJQ/cm
(5)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gal/jk

157-2466-18

REC-72

1 JUL 1 1965

EX-101

AGENCY: AGSI, OXI, OSI, SEC, INT-1, INT-2, ISB, CRD
DATE FORW: 6/29/65
HOW FORW: RCS
BY: SP1 gal

1 cc 928 RB
all - mel
1-30-65

1cc & cc LHM
808 RB

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 24, 1965

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
HOMER, LOUISIANA CHAPTER

On June 10, 1965, GEORGE DODD, Negro male of [redacted], [redacted], Louisiana, an individual active in Civil Rights activity in the Claiborne Parish, Louisiana area, indicated that a Chapter of the Deacons for Defense and Justice had been formed in Homer, Louisiana. DODD indicated that the organization, exclusively composed of local Negro males, had originally been formed by Negroes in Bogalusa and Jonesboro, Louisiana, as a self-protection group. DODD continued to explain that the organization was active in areas where Civil Rights activity had either actually or was presumed to potentially precipitate violence against Negroes by local white segregationists.

b6
b7C

Mr. DODD said that the specific purpose of the group was to arm themselves and to "meet force with force" in such instances as local white men employed force or "terror tactics" against Negroes. Mr. DODD was emphatic in stressing that the organization intended no aggressive or violent action against any individual or group, and that no member of the organization would employ any type of force unless such action was initiated against him first.

Mr. DODD furnished a list of Negro male individuals who are currently members of the Homer, Louisiana Chapter of the organization and the positions they occupy, as follows:

GEORGE DODD	Homer, Louisiana	President
FRED LEWIS	Holsey Stop, Lisbon, Louisiana	Vice President
OTIS CHATHAN	Homer, Louisiana	Secretary
JOE LESTER GREEN	Homer, Louisiana	Financial Secretary
ROY SMITH	Homer, Louisiana	Treasurer
BILL PITTS	Homer, Louisiana	Member
EMERSON BANKS	Homer, Louisiana	Member
GRANT BANKS	Homer, Louisiana	Member
NAPOLEON GREEN	Homer, Louisiana	Member
OTHAR LEWIS	Homer, Louisiana	Member
WILLIE JAMES MORRIS	Homer, Louisiana	Member
JAMES BENNETT	Homer, Louisiana	Member

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 80/1K 7-2466 - 18

ENCLOSURE

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the F.B.I. It is the property of the F.B.I and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

CONGRESSIONAL MAIL

FORWARD IN CELLOPHANE ENVELOPE

DO NOT MARK OR DEFACE IT IN ANY WAY !

C-6

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C.

June 30th, 1965

Congressional Liaison
Office
Federal Bur. of Investigation

Sir:

The attached communication is sent for your consideration. Please investigate the statements contained therein and forward me the necessary information for reply, returning the enclosed correspondence with your answer.

Yours truly,

M. C.

James H. Morrison
2354 Rayburn Building
Washington, D. C.

ENCLOSURE

TRUE COPY

Varnado, La.
June 23, 1965

Urgent

Rep. Jimmy Morrison
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir.

Urgently request you ask Justice Dept. to look into Matter of "Deacons For Defense," in Bogalusa, La. one Charles Sims, reported to be president. They are supposed to have Machine guns, and hand grenades. I live seven miles from that arnsnal, in the hands of a bunch of idoitic Negros, and I want that investigated!

Would appreciate hearing from you immediately that you are looking into this.

Sincerely yours

Dorothy S. McNeese

157-2466-19

ENCLOSURE

Urgent

Varnado, La.
June 27, 1965

Rep. Jimmy Morrison
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir,

Urgently request you ask Justice Dept. to look into matter of "Deacons for Defense" in Bogalusa, one Charles Sims, reported to be president. They are supposed to have machine guns and hand grenades. We live seven miles from that armonac, in the hands of a bunch of idiotic negs. And we want that investigated!

Would appreciate hearing from you immediately that you are looking into this.

Sincerely yours
Dorothy S. McNeese

TC 7-6-65
Pgs not to division

REC-28 157-2466-19

July 6, 1965

Honorable James H. Morrison
House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gch/lf

JUL 6 3 48 PM '65
REC'D-READING ROOM
F B I

My dear Congressman:

I received your communication of June 30th and the enclosed letter from Miss Dorothy S. McNeese.

While I would like to be of assistance to your constituent, information contained in our files must be maintained as confidential in accordance with regulations of the Department of Justice. She may be assured, however, that this Bureau is ever aware of its responsibilities, and whenever a violation of a law within our jurisdiction occurs, we will make every effort to continue to discharge our obligations with the highest degree of thoroughness and dispatch.

I am returning Miss McNeese's letter with this communication.

MAILED 8
JUL 6 1965
COMM-FBI

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

Enclosure

1 - New Orleans - Enclosures (2)

NOTE: Our relations with Congressman Morrison have been generally cordial. A prior communication from McNeese to this Bureau on 5/4/65 was not acknowledged because of critical remarks regarding the FBI's work in the civil rights field. The New Orleans Office is conducting a current investigation regarding Deacons for Defense and Justice to determine its activities and leadership. It is a Negro group formed in Louisiana with one Ernest Thomas as apparently its spokesman. He has advised Negroes that they should arm themselves and form roving patrols which will assist Negroes when Negroes are being arrested.

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

66 JUL 20 1965

(5)

(continued on next page)

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

Fees and dues of the group are used to purchase ammunition, radio equipment and literature. Thomas claims they have 50 chapters in four Southern states. The organization was formed as a protective measure for Negroes who are not suitably protected by local law enforcement agencies. A Charles L. Sims identified himself as head of this group.

7/19/65

Airtel

1 - Mr. J. L Martin

To: SACs, New Orleans (157-3290) (Enc.)
Birmingham (157-1446) (Enc.)
Charlotte (157-882) (Enc.)
Jackson (157-3465) (Enc.)
Jacksonville (157-new) (Enc.)
Mobile (157-1017) (Enc.)
Savannah (157-731) (Enc.)

From: Director, FBI (157-2466)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gew/jk

DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
RACIAL MATTERS
OO:NEW ORLEANS

ReBuairtel to New Orleans dated 2/26/65, NOairtel to Bureau 3/26/65 and NOteletype 7/14/65.

Enclosed for each office is one copy of a "Wall Street Journal" article dated 7/12/65, entitled "More Dixie Negroes Buy Arms to Retaliate Against White Attacks."

For the information of Offices receiving this communication, the Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc., is a Negro organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Louisiana with headquarters at Jonesboro, Louisiana. The Deacons has as one of its purposes, the arming of Negroes for protection against Klan violence and recently has been active in racial demonstrations in Bogalusa, Louisiana. In addition to the enclosed articles, it has received wide publicity. It has been reported in news articles, such as the enclosed, that the Deacons has 50 to 55 chapters in several states; it allegedly has 5,000 to 15,000 members and has acquired a large number of weapons. Bureau investigation to date has not substantiated apparent exaggerated claims. At early organizational meetings in Bogalusa, Louisiana, in February, 1965, Deacon leaders boasted that they had sources who could furnish large amounts of weapons and ammunition including automatic weapons. It is necessary, therefore, that we obtain complete facts as to the organization's actual strength.

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

JLM:pjn
(16)

MAILED 5
JUL 19 1965
COMM-FBI

REC 25 157-2466-20

58 JUL 28 1965

19 JUL 20 1965

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

MAIL ROOM ✓ TELETYPE UNIT

Airtel to SAC, New Orleans
RE: DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
157-2466

ReNOairtel of 3/26/65, sets forth leads to interview officers and leaders of the Deacons in an effort to obtain details concerning membership, arms and activities. New Orleans immediately conduct interviews of Deacons' officers with the purposes of obtaining complete information regarding the organization and discouraging illegal arming and illegal acts.

It is noted that the recipient offices, except New Orleans, advised by teletypes 7/14-15/65, that the organization did not exist in their territories. Nevertheless, all offices receiving this communication will immediately conduct appropriate investigation to determine if there are any Deacons' Chapters in their respective Divisions. Promptly advise the Bureau of the existence of any Deacons' Chapters or attempts to organize. Determine leadership, strength of membership, activities, and arms acquired. Be especially alert for any large supply of arms and their source. Disseminate all pertinent information to Army Intelligence and Secret Service, locally. Promptly submit letterhead memoranda concerning developments.

New Orleans, as Office of origin, is instructed to submit an investigative report within thirty days which should include results of all investigation to date.

NOTE:

Memorandum, Baumgardner to Sullivan, dated 7/14/65, answered an inquiry of the Director as to the accuracy of the "Wall Street Journal's" article, 7/12/65. This organization has been under continuous investigation since January, 1965, and regular dissemination has been made to the Intelligence Community, Secret Service, the Department and the Community Relations Service. We are continuing to follow closely this investigation and believe that further intensified investigation being directed by this airtel is merited.

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

FBI

Date: 7/12/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIR MAIL
(Priority)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

SUBJECT: DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
RM

For information of the Bureau, ROY REED, of the New York Times, telephonically advised he was preparing a magazine story for the New York Times Sunday Supplement on the Deacons for Defense and Justice.

REED advised he had information from members of the Deacons for Defense and Justice that they had 50 or 55 chapters either already in operation or being put in operation in Louisiana, and they were extending this into Alabama and Mississippi.

REED stated he had talked to members of this organization in Jonesboro, La., and this is where he got his information, but in talking to other people, they advised this organization was not as big as the members claimed it to be, and he was going to Bogalusa, La., to try to verify this.

He inquired as to whether the New Orleans Office could give him any information and he was advised "no comment".

C.C. - Wick
3 - Bureau (RM)
1 - Birmingham (Info) (RM)
1 - Jackson (Info) (RM)
1 - Mobile (Info) (RM)
2 - New Orleans

JTS:sam
(8)

REC-57 157-2466-21

ST-105 JUL 14 1965

58 JUL 29 1965

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

SUBV. CONTROL

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : W. C. Sullivan

FROM : F. J. Baumgardner

SUBJECT: DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INCORPORATED
RACIAL MATTERS

DATE: 7-15-65

1 - Belmont
1 - Mohr
1 - DeLoach
1 - Rosen
1 - Sullivan
1 - Bland 1 - Baumgardner
1 - Phillips

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

The Director and Mr. Tolson have inquired as to the accuracy of an article in the 7-12-65 issue of "The Wall Street Journal" headed "More Dixie Negroes Buy Arms to Retaliate Against White Attacks." The article (attached) primarily concerns the Deacons of Defense and Justice which is an all-Negro secret organization centered in Louisiana with headquarters at Jonesboro.

Background of Organization

The Articles of Incorporation of the Deacons dated 3-5-65 in the State of Louisiana gave the purposes of the organization as including: to educate citizens, especially minority groups, in the Constitution and laws of the United States; to teach the obligations of citizenship; and to teach the defense of property and personal rights by "any and all honorable and legal means." At early organizational meetings, leaders discussed purposes as being the acquisition of weapons by Negroes in an effort to defend themselves against Klan violence and to provide protection not provided by local authorities. The Deacons Vice-President and organizer, Earnest Thomas, also told Negroes that they should arm and form roving patrols to assist any Negroes being arrested. The Deacons have worked closely with James Farmer and his organization, the Congress of Racial Equality, and with the Bogalusa Voters League, a local civil rights organization. The Deacons have been active in the recent demonstrations in Bogalusa. The Deacons have been the subject of a continuing Bureau investigation since January, 1965, and we have been regularly disseminating information concerning this organization to the Department, military intelligence, Secret Service and the Community Relations Service.

Analysis of Article

ENCLOSURE The following is based upon information in Bureau files including a current check with the field. The article is generally accurate in respect to the purposes of the organization, the

Enc.
SFP:pdb
(9)

REC 4 157-2466-23

CONTINUED - OVER

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 Bl/fk

56 JUL 27 1965

3 JUL 23 1965

factors which motivated its start, its close relationship with other groups such as the Congress of Racial Equality and the possession of firearms and walkie-talkie radio equipment by its members. There are, however, a number of inaccuracies and exaggerations in the article relating to the following: The article reports claims by some Deacons leaders of having over 50 chapters including some in neighboring states. Bureau investigation reveals chapters exist only in Jonesboro, Bogalusa and Homer, Louisiana; none in neighboring states. Article reports membership estimates as between 5,000 and 15,000. Bureau investigation indicates this highly exaggerated and membership probably no more than a few hundred.

Article reports Deacons possess firearms and this generally borne out by our investigation including actual observations by Bureau Agents. In this connection, it should be noted that most rural southerners possess firearms and that the carrying of rifles and pistols in rural areas is commonplace by both whites and Negroes. Such firearms and ammunition are readily available from local hardware, sporting goods stores, mail order houses and gun dealers. The carrying of firearms in Louisiana is permissible provided the weapons are not concealed on the person. A significant comment was made by a Deacons member, Collins Amos, who said that Deacons members do not actually engage in armed patrols but that the story was circulated concerning such patrols in order to discourage Klansmen from causing trouble in Negro sections. Article reports that Bureau Agents are monitoring walkie-talkie transmissions of the Deacons. Although our New Orleans Office has equipment in Bogalusa capable of monitoring the Deacons walkie-talkies, no monitoring has been done of the Deacons.

Article reports a Deacons chapter in Varnado, seven miles north of Bogalusa, to protect the widow of Oneal Moore, a Negro Deputy Sheriff slain June, 1965. Our investigation in the Varnado area including interviews with the Moore widow has not established that any protection is being undertaken by the Deacons and there is no known chapter located there.

OBSERVATIONS:

Inasmuch as the Deacons were apparently organized for defensive purposes as a retaliation to Klan acts against Negroes,

MEMBER - SUBJECT ORGANIZATION
LA

it is not surprising that Deacons leaders would exaggerate its strength for the purpose of discouraging violence against Negroes and to help encourage increased membership. A striking illustration of the exaggeration as to the number of chapters is the fact that an article by Roy Reed appeared in the 6/6/65 issue of "The New York Times" which quoted Deacons leader Thomas as saying they had 50-55 chapters in various stages of organization. On 7/12/65 Reed telephoned our New Orleans Office to advise that he was preparing another article, that he had reports of 50-55 chapters and contradictory information that the Deacons is not as big as claimed. He was given a "no comment" reply to his inquiry for information concerning the Deacons. This surely illustrates the uncertainty as to the actual facts notwithstanding newspaper accounts.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is for your information. We will continue to follow closely this investigation and keep you advised of pertinent developments.

DECLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY DERIVED FROM:
FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE
DATE 08-24-2018 BY: [redacted]

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

b6
b7C

FBI

Date: 7/15/65

Transmit the following in CONFIDENTIAL (U)
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, JACKSON (157-3465)

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
RACIAL MATTERS

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP1 gal/jr 7-16-80
REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2, 4.2 2
DATE OF REVIEW 7-15-85

ReJNtel to Bureau, 7/14/65.

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight copies of LHM. Two copies LHM furnished New Orleans Division.

The confidential sources mentioned in enclosed LHM are:

[redacted] contacted 7/11/65.
[redacted], contacted 7/11/65.
[redacted], Mississippi
[redacted], contacted 7/13/65.
[redacted] contacted 7/13/65.
[redacted] contacted 7/13/65.
[redacted] contacted 7/13/65.

b7D

(U)

In the event any additional pertinent information is received concerning the Deacons for Defense and Justice, the Bureau and New Orleans will be immediately advised.

3 - Bureau (Encls. 8)
2 - New Orleans (Encls. 2)
2 - Jackson
HEH:cj
(7)

ENCLOSURE

REC-23 157-2466-24

17 JUL 17 1965

1cc & ~~ee~~ LHM
808 RB

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

CONFIDENTIAL (U)

56 JUL 27 1965

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC. SER.
DEPT. ISD, CRD, RAC
DATE FORW: 7-20-65
HOW FORW:
BY:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

Jackson, Mississippi
July 15, 1965

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
RACIAL MATTERS

Confidential sources who have furnished reliable information in the past and who are familiar with the activities of civil rights organizations in Jackson, Mississippi, have advised that they know of no organizations of the "Deacons for Defense and Justice" in the State of Mississippi.

On July 14, 1965, Charles Snodgrass (NA) Administrative Assistant, Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol, who is in charge of investigations, advised that he had recently made a specific check concerning the possibilities of the "Deacons for Defense and Justice" operating in Mississippi, and found no evidence that they were. He stated that he made a special effort to determine if there might be any such organization in the Mississippi counties neighboring Bogalusa, Louisiana, but found no evidence that this organization was operating in any of these counties.

On July 14, 1965, Charles Evers, Field Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Jackson, Mississippi, advised in connection with a comment attributed to him in an article in "The Wall Street Journal" of July 12, 1965, that he had referred to the Negroes in Mississippi who were defending themselves from violence and it was these individuals that he stated he "was glad were around". He said he knew of no groups of the "Deacons for Defense and Justice" in existence in Mississippi.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 gwff

157-2466-24

ENCLOSURE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
JUL 14 1965

TELETYPE

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

FBI WASH DC

FBI SAVANNAH

6:52 PMEST URGENT 7/14/65 CJD

TO DIRECTOR, I

FROM SAVANNAH /157-731/

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE- RACIAL MATTERS.

RECE TEL CALL THIS DATE, PERTAINING TO ARTICLE, WALL ST. JOURNAL, JULY TWELVE LAST.

SAVANNAH KNOWS OF NO ACTIVITY CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION IN DIVISION. EFFORTS BEING MADE TO DETERMINE IF IN EXISTENCE THIS DIVISION. AM COPY CE FOR INFO.

END

WA...JPM

FBI WASH DC

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP8 Sgt

157-2466-25

NO JUL 27 1965

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6 AUG 2 1965

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

JUL 15 1965

TELETYPE

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
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Mr. Callahan
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Miss Holmes
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FBI WASH DC

FBI NEW ORLS

4-45AM CST URGENT 7-15-65 CWB

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

TO: DIRECTOR

FROM: NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC., AKA. DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE. RACIAL MATTERS.

RE BU TEL-CALL JULY FOURTEEN SIXTYFIVE.

I. GENERAL SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE (DDJ)

A. NUMERICAL STRENGTH

ON JANUARY FIVE SIXTYFIVE CHARLES JOSEPH FENTON, REPRESENTATIVE OF CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY (CORE), ADVISED THAT AN ORGANIZATION KNOWN AS THE DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE HAD BEEN ORGANIZED AT JONESBORO, LOUISIANA.

REC-118 157-3466-26

REVEREND FREDERICK D. KIRK PATRICK, MEMBER OF THE DDJ, JONESBORO, LA. ADVISED ON JANUARY FIVE SIXTYFIVE THAT THERE WERE BETWEEN TWO HUNDRED FIFTY AND THREE HUNDRED MEMBERS OF THE DDJ'S IN JACKSON PARISH, LOUISIANA. ON MARCH ONE SIXTYFIVE CHIEF OF POLICE CLAXTON KNIGHT ,BOGALUSA PD, STATED ON THE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY TWENTYEIGHT SIXTYFIVE

END PAGE ONE

3 JUL 27 1965

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cc-Phillips

Memo Belmont to Sullivan 7/15/65

A MEETING OF THE DDJ'S HAD TAKEN PLACE IN BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA. KNIGHT STATED THAT FOURTEEN NEGROES ATTENDED THIS MEETING.

ON MARCH TEN SIXTYFIVE ROYAN BURRIS AND LA CHARLES R. SIMS, BOGALUSA, LA., ADVISED THAT THERE ARE FOURTEEN MEMBERS OF THIS ORGANIZATION IN THE BOGALUSA BRANCH OF THE DDJ. CAL

ON JANUARY TEN SIXTYFIVE GEORGE DODD, PRESIDENT OF HOMER, LOUISIANA CHAPTER OF THE DDJ ADVISED THAT THERE WERE TWELVE MEMBERS OF THE DDJ INCLUDING HIMSELF IN HOMER, LOUISIANA.

B. MEMBERSHIP

ON JUNE THIRTEEN SIXTYFIVE, CHARLES SIMS LA CAL APPEARED ON THE LOUIS LOMAX TELEVISION SHOW, CHANNEL

END PAGE TWO

ELEVEN, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, STATED THERE ARE FROM FIFTY TO SIXTY CHAPTERS OF THE DDJ'S IN THREE OR FOUR STATES.

AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE LOS ANGELES TIMES ON JUNE THIRTEEN SIXTYFIVE WITH A DATELINE OF BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA, STATED IN PART THAT EARNEST THOMAS OF JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, AN OFFICIAL AND FULL-TIME ORGANIZER OF THE DEACONS, HAD TOLD NEWSMEN THAT THERE ARE FIFTY TO FIFTYFIVE CHAPTERS IN LOUISIANA, MISSISSIPPI AND ALABAMA. FUND RAISING UNITS ARE BEING ESTABLISHED IN SAN FRANCISCO, NEW YORK AND OTHER LARGE CITIES.

IN THE CONTINUATION OF THIS ARTICLE, ROBERT HICKS OF BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA ESTIMATED THE NUMBER OF DEACONS IN THE BOGALUSA, LA. AREA AT BETWEEN ONE HUNDRED

END PAGE THREE

SEVENTYFIVE AND TWO HUNDRED MEMBERS.

THE ARTICLE FURTHER STATED THAT AT THE SAME TIME OTHER LOUISIANA UNITS WERE BEING ESTABLISHED IN BATON ROUGE, NEW IBERIA AND PLAQUEMINE. STATED TOTAL STRENGTH OF THE DEACONS IS KEPT SECRET BY THE ORGANIZATION BUT OUTSIDE ESTIMATES HAVE RANGED FROM FIVE THOUSAND TO FIFTEEN THOUSAND ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE.

C. CHAPTERS

AT THE PRESENT TIME IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA THERE ARE THREE CHAPTERS KNOWN TO THE NEW ORLEANS DIVISION. THESE CHAPTERS ARE LOCATED AT JONESBORO, BOGALUSA AND HOMER, LOUISIANA.

AS NOTED IN THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE LOS ANGELES TIMES DATED JUNE

END PAGE FOUR

THIRTEEN SIXTYFIVE, ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS WERE REPORTEDLY BEING ESTABLISHED IN BATON ROUGE, NEW IBERIA AND PLAQUEMINE.

D. ARMS

ON FEBRUARY TWENTYTWO SIXTYFIVE [redacted] b7D

[redacted], LOUISIANA POLICE DEPARTMENT ADVISED THAT HE HAD LEARNED THAT EARNEST THOMAS (DDJ) JONESBORO, LOUISIANA AT A MEETING OF THE DDJ IN BOGALUSA HAD STATED THAT NEGROES SHOULD BUY SUBSTANTIAL WEAPONS SUCH AS THREE ZERO SIX CALIBER RIFLES. THOMAS SUGGESTED THAT TWELVE OR SIXTEEN GUAGE SHOT GUNS WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL.

THOMAS STATED THAT HIS GROUP HAD CONTACTS IN CHICAGO AND HOUSTON FOR AUTOMATIC WEAPONS AND MENTIONED PURCHASING A FIFTY AND THIRTY CALIBER

END PAGE FIVE

MACHINE GUN.

ON MARCH TEN SIXTYFIVE ROYAN BURRIS, MEMBER OF THE DDJ AT BOGALUSA, STATED IN AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE LOS ANGELES TIMES THAT EARNEST THOMAS OF JONESBORO, AN OFFICIAL AND FULL-TIME ORGANIZER OF THE DEACONS, STATED THAT THE DEACONS HAVE MACHINE GUNS AND HAND GRENADES.

ON MARCH TWENTYFOUR SIXTYFIVE HENRY COLLINS AMOS, A MEMBER OF THE DDJ AT JONESBORO, LOUISIANA, ADVISED THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE DDJ HAVE FIREARMS FOR SELF-DEFENSE AND FOR PROTECTION AGAINST PERSONS POSSIBLY CONNECTED WITH THE KU KLUX KLAN.

AMOS STATED THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE DDJ DO NOT ACTUALLY ENGAGE IN ARMED PATROLS BUT THAT

END PAGE SIX

THE STORY CONCERNING THESE PATROLS WAS GIVEN OUT TO DISCOURAGE KLANSMEN AND PERSONS OF THAT TYPE FROM GOING INTO THE NEGRO SECTIONS CAUSING TROUBLE.

AGENTS OF THE NEW ORLEANS DIVISION HAVE OBSERVED SIDEARMS, RIFLES AND SHOT GUNS, BUT NO MACHINE-GUNS IN THE POSSESSION OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE DDJ IN BOGALUSA AND JONESBORO, LOUISIANA.

E. SOURCES OF ARMS

INVESTIGATION BY BOTH THE CHICAGO AND HOUSTON DIVESION OF THE FBI HAVE FAILED TO DETERMINE ANY SOURCE FROM WHICH THE DDJ'S WERE SECURING MACHINE GUNS OR AUTOMATIC WEAPONS.

THE THREE KNOWN CHAPTERS OF THE DDJ'S ARE LOCATED IN RURAL AREAS IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA. IN THESE VARIOUS

END PAGE SEVEN

RURAL AREAS THE CARRYING OF RIFLES AND PISTOLS ARE COMMONPLACE BY THE CITIZENRY, BOTH WHITE AND NEGRO. FIREARMS SUCH AS RIFLES AND PISTOLS AND AMMUNITION ARE READILY AVAILABLE FROM LOCAL HARDWARE, SPORTING GOOD STORES, MAIL ORDER HOUSES, AND GUN DEALERS. THE CARRYING OF FIREARMS IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA IS PERMISSIBLE PROVIDING THESE WEAPONS ARE NOT CONCEALED ON THE PERSON.

BECAUSE OF THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE DDJ'S IT IS BELIEVED THAT WITHOUT OUTSIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THAT PURCHASING OF WEAPONS ON A LARGE SCALE COULD NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED BY THE DDJ'S.

II. HENRY AUSTIN ALLEGED MEMBER IN THE DDJ'S

END PAGE EIGHT

PAGE NINE

INVESTIGATION TO DATE IN THE BOGALUSA AREA HAS NOT ESTABLISHED AUSTIN'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE DDJ'S. IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT AUSTIN IS A STATE DEFENDENT INVOLVING THE ASSAULT OF ALTON CROWE. NO INTERVIEW HAS BEEN CONDUCTED OF AUSTIN.

III. JONESBORO CHAPTER OF DDJ'S

THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION FILED MARCH NINE SIXTYFIVE WITH THE LOUISIANA SECRETARY OF STATE SHOW THE CORPORATE DOMICILE OF DDJ AS JONESBORO, LOUISIANA.

IV. ALLEGED MONITORING OF THE WALKIE-

END PAGE NINE

TALKIES OF THE DDJ BY FBI.

THE NEW ORLEANS DIVISION HAS EQUIPMENT IN BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA CAPABLE OF MONITORING THE WALKIE TALKIES OF THE DDJ, KLAN AND CITIZENS BAND RADIOS, HOWEVER, NO MONITORING HAS BEEN DONE OF THE DDJ.

V. ALLEGED PROTECTION OF THE WIDOW OF O'NEAL MOORE

INVESTIGATION IN THE VARNADO AREA WHERE O'NEAL MOORE RESIDED AS WELL INTERVIEWS OF O'NEAL MOORE'S WIFE HAS NOT ESTABLISHED THAT ANY PROTECTION IIS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE DDJ'S IN THE VARNADO, LOUISIANA AREA. IN ADDITION THERE IS NO KNOWN UNIT OF THE DDJ'S LOCATED IN VARNADO, LOUISIANA.

@ BASED ON THE FACTS AVAILABLE BY INVESTIGATION TO DATE THE DEACONS FOR DEFENSE OF JUSTICE WHICH ORIGINATED IN JONESBORO, LOUISIANA THIS YEAR, HAS ATTRACTED A CERTAIN ELEMENT OF THE NEGRO RACE BUT THE CLAIMS BY NUMEROUS ORGANIZERS THAT THERE ARE BETWEEN FIVE TO FIFTEEN THOUSAND APPEARED TO BE GROSSLY EXAGGERATED. AS RACIAL DEMONSTRATIONS, MARCHES AND ACTIVITIES CONTINUE TO INCREASE THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF LOUISIANA, IT CAN BE ANTICIPATED THAT THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS WILL INCREASE. IT CAN READILY BE SEEN FROM INFORMATION DEVELOPED THAT THE CHAPTERS ARE GENERALLY FORMED WHENEVER THERE IS ANY SORT OF RACIAL ACTIVITY OR DEMONSTRATION IN THE PARTICULAR LOCALS, AND WITH THE INCREASE IN PARADES AND DEMONSTRATIONS BY THE NEGROES IN VARIOUS CITIES

THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF LOUISIANA THE ORGANIZERS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ENDEAVOR TO ESTABLISH CHAPTERS IN THESE PARTICULAR CITIES. AS INFORMATION IS DEVELOPED THE BUREAU WILL BE PROMPTLY ADVISED.

END.

WA... NHH

FBI WASH DC

TU AND CLR

cc Phillips

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FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE
DATE 08-31-2018 BY [redacted]

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
JUL 15 1965

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
TELE. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

FBI WASH DC

TELETYPE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (U)

FBI BIRMGHAM

S.T. 1159 PM CST URGENT 7-14-65 WCR

TO DIRECTOR

FROM BIRMINGHAM /157-1446/ 2P

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, RM. OO NEW ORLEANS.

RE NEW ORLEANS TELEPHONE CALL TO BIRMINGHAM JULY FOURTEENTH INSTANT.

BIRMINGHAM INDICES REFLECT NO REFERENCES TO CAPTIONED GROUP OTHER THAN FURNISHED BY NEW ORLEANS.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFERENCED COMMUNICATION BIRMINGHAM CONDUCTED FOLLOWING INVESTIGATION ON JULY FOURTEENTH INSTANT.

[redacted] AND MARCUS JONES, DETECTIVE, (U) BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA POLICE DEPARTMENT, WHO SPECIALIZES IN RACIAL MATTERS, WERE CONTACTED CONCERNING INSTANT MATTER. INFORMANT AND DETECTIVE JONES ADVISED THEY COULD FURNISH NO INFORMATION CONCERNING ANY ACTIVITY OF THIS GROUP IN BIRMINGHAM DIVISION NOR THE IDENTITY OF ANY BIRMINGHAM DIVISION MEMBERS OF THE GROUP. INFORMANT AND DETECTIVE JONES ARE COGNIZANT OF AND FOLLOW ACTIVITIES OF MOST RACIAL GROUPS IN BIRMINGHAM DIVISION. BIRMINGHAM WILL FOLLOW MATTER AND FURNISH ANY NEW INFORMATION DEVELOPED. b7D

REC. 60 157-2466-27

END PAGE ONE

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REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2, 4.2
DATE OF REVIEW 7-14-85

JUL 29 1965

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (U)

54 AUG 5 1965

cc. Phillips

CONFIDENTIAL (U)

CONCERNING ARTICLE JULY TWELVE LAST ISSUE OF WALL STREET JOURNAL, BY FRED L. ZIMMERMAN, JOURNAL WRITER, CAPTIONED "RACE AND VIOLENCE", BIRMINGHAM NOTES MAJOR PORTION DEALS WITH RACIAL SITUATION IN LOUISIANA. BIRMINGHAM NOT AWARE OF ACTUAL RACIAL SITUATION IN STATES OTHER THAN BIRMINGHAM DIVISION. RACIAL SITUATION IN BIRMINGHAM DIVISION APPEARS TO BE CALM WITH VARIOUS GROUPS, NEGRO AND WHITE, ATTEMPTING TO SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS TO RACIAL PROBLEMS THAT WILL BE SATISFACTORY TO ALL CONCERNED.

BIRMINGHAM HAS NO KNOWLEDGE THAT NEGROES IN BIRMINGHAM DIVISION PLAN TO RESORT TO VIOLENT TACTICS OR FOLLOW AN "EYE FOR AN EYE" THEORY. BIRMINGHAM IS OF OPINION THAT MOST INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS IN BIRMINGHAM DIVISION DESIRE TO AVOID ALL RACIAL VIOLENCE AND ARE EARNESTLY SEEKING A PEACEFUL ANSWER TO RACE PROBLEMS RATHER THAN THE FORMING OF "ARMED ORGANIZATIONS" AS MENTIONED IN ARTICLE.

COPY BEING FORWARDED TO NEW ORLEANS AIRMAIL REGISTERED.

END

WA JMS

FBI WASH DC

P

CONFIDENTIAL (U)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
JUL 15 1965

TELETYPE

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

FBI WASH DC

FBI JKN MISS

10:57 PM CST URGENT 7-14-65 MJK

TO : DIRECTOR

FROM : JACKSON (157-3465)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE. RM.

RENOTELEPHONE CALL TO JACKSON JULY FOURTEEN, SIXTYFIVE CONCERNING ARTICLE IN JULY TWELVE NINETEEN SIXTYFIVE, ISSUE OF "THE WALL STREET JOURNAL" CONCERNING CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION.

THE JACKSON DIVISION HAS RECEIVED NO INFORMATION TO INDICATE THAT THERE IS ANY CHAPTER OR MEMBER OF THE DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE IN MISS. INFORMANTS AND SOURCES WITHIN CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN JACKSON, MISS., CONTACTED ON JULY ELEVEN SIXTYFIVE RELATIVE TO CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION STATED THEY KNEW OF NO SUCH ORGANIZATION IN THE STATE OF MISS.

ON JULY FOURTEEN SIXTYFIVE CHARLES SNODGRASS (NA) ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT MHSP IN CHARGE OF INVESTIGATIONS ADVISED THAT HE HAD RECENTLY MADE A SPECIFIC CHECK CONCERNING

REC-60 157-2466-28

END PAGE ONE

9 JUL 29 1965

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cc. Phillips

THE POSSIBILITIES OF CAPTIONED ORGANIZATION OPERATING IN MISS., AND FOUND NO EVIDENCE THAT THEY WERE. HE STATED THAT HE MADE A SPECIFIC EFFORT TO DETERMINE IF THERE MIGHT BE ANY SUCH ORGANIZATION IN THE COUNTIES NEIGHBORING BOGALUSA, LA., BUT FOUND NO EVIDENCE THAT THIS ORGANIZATION WAS IN ANY OF THESE COUNTIES.

CHARLES EVERS ADVISED ON JULY FOURTEEN INSTANT CONCERNING THE ABOVE ARTICLE THAT THE WALL STREET JOURNAL REPORTER ONLY RECORDED A PART OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH EVERS. EVERS STATED HE HAD REFERRED TO THE NEGROES IN MISSISSIPPI WHO WERE DEFENDING THEMSELVES FROM VIOLENCE, THESE INDIVIDUALS EVERS STATED HE WAS GLAD THEY WERE AROUND. STATED HE KNEW OF NO CAPTIONED GROUPS IN EXISTENCE IN MISSISSIPPI.

AIR MAIL COPY TO NEW ORLEANS.

END

WA HFL

FBI WASH DC

CLRP

FBI WASH DC

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
JUL 14 1968

TELETYPE

FBI CHARLT

906

FBI CHARLT

PM URGENT 7-14-65 DKR

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: CHARLOTTE (157-882)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-16-80 BY

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
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Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, RACIAL MATTER.

RE NEW ORLEANS TELEPHONE CALL TODAY PERTAINING TO ARTICAL, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, MONDAY JULY TWELVE LAST.

PAGE ONE, ABOVE ISSUE, WALL STREET JOURNAL, CONTAINS STATEMENT DEACONS HAVE FORMED GROUPS IN SEVERAL TOWNS IN S.C. AND IN TWO TOWNS IN WESTERN N.C.

DURHAM MORNING HERALD, DAILY NEWSPAPER, DURHAM, N.C., IN JULY ONE LAST ISSUE REPORTED ON NATIONAL CONVENTION CORE WHICH TOOK PLACE DURHAM, N.C., JULY ONE THROUGH FIVE LAST. ARTICLE REPORTED THAT JAMES FARMER, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF CORE, HAD STATED HE WOULD NOT CONDEMN THE DEACONS ORGANIZATION DESCRIBED AS A MOVEMENT WHICH HAS RECENTLY BEEN ORGANIZED IN THE DEEP SOUTH. DEACONS, ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, ARE ARMED VIGILANTE GROUPS SET UP TO PROTECT NEGRO NEIGHBORHOODS AGAINST WHITE MILITANTS AND INADEQUATE LAW ENFORCEMENT.

END PAGE ONE

REC 25 157-2466 29

9 JUL 29 1965

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PAGE THREE

JULY TWELVE LAST CAPTIONED "NATIONAL CONVENTION OF CORE, DURHAM, N.C., JULY ONE-FIVE, NINETEENSIXTYFIVE, RACIAL MATTERS."

COPY TO SAVANNAH AIR MAIL.

CIZXX

CORR PAGE ONE LLNE 5 WORD 5 SHD. BE TOWNS

CORR PAGE TWO LINE 1 WOREXXOXXWORD 5 SHD. BE DURHAM

WA...JPM

FBI WASH DC

TU CLR.

JULY THREE LAST ISSUE DURHAM MORNING HEARLD CONTAINS ARTICLE SHOWING ERNEST THOMAS OF MISS., A CHARTER MEMBER OF DEACONS, APPEARED BEFORE CORE CONVENTION AND BLASTED KKK AND REDNECK TECHNIQUES. HE DECLARED PERIOD OF NEGRO NON-VIOLENCE IS OVER. THOMAS CHARGED WHITE MEN HAVE GIVEN NEGRO NEW LAWS AND PRIVILEGES BUT NEGROES HAVE BEEN BEATEN WHEN THEY TRIED TO USE THEM. HE SAID WE MUST HAVE THE DEACONS TO LET THE KLAN KNOW THAT NEGROES AS A WHOLE ARE NOT NON-VIOLENT. ARTICLE SHOWS THAT CORE DIRECTOR JAMES FARMER VOICED HIS SUPPORT OF DEACONS. ALSO, DR. LONNIE X, BLACK MUSLIM MINISTER OF WASHINGTON, ALSO SUPPORTED DEACONS.

NO ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE DURING CORE CONVENTION OR INFORMATION RECEIVED AS TO ANY CHAPTERS OF CAPTIONED ORGINIZATION WITH CHARLOTTE TERRITORYAND NO INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM INFORMANTS OR SOURCES THAT SUCH CHAPTERS OR UNITS EXIST.

LOGICAL SOURCES AND INFORMANTS BEING CONTACTED IN EFFORT TO DETERMINE IF ANY UNITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION DO EXIST WITHIN CHARLOTTE DIVISION.

INFORMATION CONCERNINGCORE CONVENTION, INCLUDING FORE-GOING INFORMATION RE DEACONS SUBMITTED IN LHM BY CHARLOTTE

END PAGE TWO

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
JUL 14 1965

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
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FBI WASH DC

FBI JACKSVLE

6-44 PM EST URGENT 7/14/65 JLC

TO DIRECTOR

FROM JACKSONVILLE /157-NEW/ 1P

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, RACIAL MATTERS.

RECALL FROM ASAC SYLVESTER FROM NEW ORLEANS TODAY.

JACKSONVILLE HAS NO INFO IN INDICES CONCERNING FORMATION OF ANY OF CAPTIONED GROUPS IN NORTHERN FLORIDA. INFORMANTS HAVE NOT INDICATED ANY SUCH ACTION BEING TAKEN.

JACKSONVILLE WILL BE ALERT FOR SUCH GROUPS AND WILL ADVISE THE BUREAU IMMEDIATELY IF ANY SUCH ACTIVITY IS STARTED.

AIRMAIL COPY TO NEW ORLEANS.

END

WA BMS

FBI WASH DC

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JUL 29 1965

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
JUL 14 1965

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. DeLoach
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Mr. Tavel
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Tele. Room
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Miss Gandy

FBI MOBILE

TELETYPE

947 PM CST URGENT 7/14/65 VFP

TO DIRECTOR AND NEW ORLEANS

FROM MOBILE /157-1017/

DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE. RM.

RE PHONE CALL FROM ASAC SYLVESTER, NEW ORLEANS TODAY, REFERENCE ARTICLE IN WALL STREET JOURNAL JULY TWLEVE LAST CAPTIONED " RACE AND VIOLENCE".

MOBILE HAS DEVELOPED NO INFORMATION TO REFLECT THAT ANY CHAPTER INSTANT ORGANIZATION IN EXISTENCE MOBILE DIVISION. AGENTS HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO REMAIN ALERT FOR INFO INDICATING FORMATION SUCH GROUPS. INFORMANTS AND SOURCES ARE BIENG LIKEWISE ALERTED AND IF ANY POSITIVE INFO RECEIVED, BUREAU AND NEW ORLEANS WILL BE PROMPTLY NOTIFIED.

END

WA LRA

FBI WASH DC

NO RJB

FBI NEW ORLS

TU ALL CLEG BXI HT COGX

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

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9 JUL 29 1965

66 AUG 4 1965

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-107

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI (157-2466)

DATE: 8/2/65

FROM: SAC, JACKSONVILLE (157-1074) (RUC)

SUBJECT: DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
RACIAL MATTERS
(OO: NEW ORLEANS)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-16-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

Re Bureau airtel to New Orleans, Etal, dated 7/19/65.

On 7/16/65, SPIVER GORDON, CORE Field Secretary for Florida, [redacted], Tallahassee, Fla., was contacted by SAs ROBERT W. CLARK and V. LLOYD WARNKEN concerning investigation on another matter. During the conversation, GORDON was asked if he was familiar with captioned group, and he replied that he was. He stated that captioned group has on occasion in the past worked with CORE. They are a group of normally local businessmen who participate in picket lines and protest marches in a non-violent manner. If violence breaks out, this group combats violence with violence. They will attack local white residences just as hate groups and klans will attack Negro residences. He added that they have most noticeably been active in Louisiana and that he has been contacted by a representative of the group who was inquiring to determine if they were needed in the North Florida area. GORDON related that he told them they were not needed at this time in North Florida and to the best of his knowledge, there are no such groups active in the state of Fla.

b6
b7C

On the dates indicated the following persons were contacted by SA V. LLOYD WARNKEN and advised they had no information concerning the existence of a group of captioned organization being in existence in the Florida area:

On 7/23/65, Mr. DALE TROY, Investigator, State Attorney's Office, Tallahassee, Fla.;

On 7/27/65, Chief of Police R. D. EDWARDS, Quincy, Fla.;

On 7/27/65, Sheriff ATHO EDWARDS, Gadsden County, Quincy, Fla.

REC-50 157-246632

2 - Bureau
2 - New Orleans
1 - Jacksonville
VLW/jeb
(5)

16 AUG 5 1965

EX-109

SEC-CONTROL UNIT/SEC

AUG 12 1965

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

On the contact, all of the above persons advised that should they obtain any information concerning captioned organization they would immediately notify the FBI.

On 7/26/65, SPIVER GORDON, CORE Field Secretary, Tallahassee, Fla., contacted SA V. LLOYD WARNKEN concerning another matter and during the course of this contact advised that there had been quite a bit of talk recently concerning the organization of a group of the Deacons of Defense and Justice possibly in Jefferson and Madison Counties in North Florida. He stated, however, that he was discouraging the organization of this group adding that he did not feel they were needed and would serve no useful purpose in North Florida at this time. He stated that to the best of his knowledge there is no such group currently operating in the state of Fla., and no formative steps being taken in an attempt to organize such a group.

In view of the fact there appears to be no such group currently active in the North Florida area, this matter is being considered RUC and should any information come to the attention of the Jacksonville Office concerning this group it will immediately be made known to the Bureau and New Orleans.

FD-36 (Rev. 12-13-56)

FBI

Date: 8/4/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (157-2466)

FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (157-3290)

"CHANGED"
DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE, INC., aka
Deacons for Defense and Justice, Inc.
RM

Title changed to reflect correct name of organization as determined through investigation Jonesboro, Louisiana.

Enclosed for San Francisco are two photostatic copies of the Articles of Incorporation of the Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc.

INFORMANT

[redacted], on 8/3/65, advised that ERNEST THOMAS, [redacted], present Vice President of Deacons of Defense and Justice, is currently in San Francisco and can be reached until 8/6/65, through area code [redacted], telephone number [redacted]. No address available.

b6
b7C
b7D

3- Bureau
2- Birmingham
2- Charlotte
2- Jackson
2- Jacksonville
2- Miami
2- San Francisco (Enc.-2)
2- Savannah
2- New Orleans

EX-107

REC-41 157-2466-33

MCA-24

AUG 22 1965

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-17-80 BY SP4 Bell

RAH:sms
(19)

C. C. WICK

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

SUPV. CONTROL

53 AUG 26 1965

NO 157-3290/sms

For the information of San Francisco [redacted] further stated that THOMAS assumed Vice Presidency of the Deacons of Defense and Justice when the application for charter was initiated as [redacted] employed by the school board, Jonesboro, Louisiana, and consideration was given to the prospect of his, [redacted], losing his job. THOMAS was to be figurehead only but assumed more power than originally anticipated. THOMAS, who [redacted] brands a radical person, began making public statements to the effect that the Deacons of Defense and Justice advocate the use of violence and that they have sources for automatic weapons in Houston, Texas, and Chicago, Illinois. b7D

According to [redacted] the Deacons of Defense and Justice of Jonesboro is entirely a Negro organization with branches in Bogalusa and Houma, Louisiana. Their efforts have been directed toward peaceful activity in the area of civic improvement to gain recognition, and they advocate violence as a defensive measure only. b7D

[redacted] further stated that THOMAS is to be removed from the Vice Presidency and the Board of Directors at the next election of the Deacons of Defense and Justice. b7D

Mr. M. M. BOONE, Personnel Manager, Continental Can Company, Jonesboro, on 8/3/65, made available the following descriptive data of ERNEST THOMAS which he readily indicated was five years old. b6 b7C

Name	ERNEST THOMAS
Race	Negro
Sex	Male
Date of Birth	[redacted]
Place of Birth	Jonesboro, Louisiana
Height	5'11"
Weight	197 pounds
Eyes	Brown
Hair	Black

[redacted]

CALIF

ILL

[redacted] LA

NO 157-3290/sms

[redacted]

MRS. ERNEST THOMAS

Relatives	Wife - EVE M. THOMAS,
	MR. & MRS. Father - W. T. THOMAS,
	Mother - DONISHA THOMAS LA
Residence	[redacted],
	[redacted], Louisiana,
	telephone number [redacted]
Social Security #	[redacted]
Military Service	U. S. Air Force, 12/29/54, to 1/6/59
Employment	Continental Can Company 7/18/60 - 11/10/60, laborer; International Harvester, 1/5/53 - 12/6/54, Western Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

b6
b7C

LEADS

SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION

AT SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

1) Through telephone number [redacted] locate ERNEST THOMAS and interview him in an effort to determine in detail the objections of the Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc. and how these objections are to be obtained, with particular emphasis on public use of firearms, potential for violence, any subversive and/or outside influence and whether patrol and guards have been utilized and under what conditions.

b6
b7C

2) Develop all information concerning the allegation of THOMAS that this group has contact in Chicago and Houston for the acquisition of automatic weapons.

3) Determine THOMAS' activities in the San Francisco area and identify any groups or organizations with which he is affiliated

4) Determine THOMAS' itinerary and approximate date of return to Jonesboro, Louisiana.

5) Attempt to determine through interview THOMAS' source of income.

It should be noted by San Francisco that the Bureau by airtel dated 2/26/65, has instructed that through interviews of all members of the Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc. that efforts should be made to develop sources relative to the Deacons of Defense and Justice, Inc. and be alert to discourage illegal arming and illegal acts by this group. The identity of [redacted] should not be disclosed to THOMAS and his impending dismissal as [redacted] should not be discussed. b7D

SAC, Los Angeles (157-1184) CONFIDENTIAL 8/17/65

Director, FBI (157-2466) C#252028

1 - Mr. Trainor
1 - Mr. B. P. Murphy
1 - Mr. Martin

DECLASSIFIED BY SP-1 AG/EW
ON 1/28/87

DEACONS OF DEFENSE
AND JUSTICE
RACIAL MATTERS

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP1 gek/fv 7-17-85
REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2. 4.2 -2
DATE OF REVIEW 8-17-85

ReLAlet and letterhead memorandum (LHM) 8/5/65, copies to Atlanta, captioned "Cominfil, SNCC"; and Los Angeles airtel and LHM 6/15/65 captioned "Deacons for Defense and Justice," copies to New Orleans. Enclosed for the information of New Orleans is one copy of referenced letter and LHM, 8/5/65.

Reairtel sets forth information that Charles Sims of the Deacons of Defense and Justice, Bogalusa, Louisiana, was in Los Angeles in June, 1965, and appeared on the Louis Lomax television program on 6/13/65. News articles concerning the Deacons appeared in the "Los Angeles Times" of 6/13/65. The Deacons is an all-Negro organization formed for the claimed purpose of self-protection against Klan violence. Its members are encouraged to carry arms, and during recent demonstrations in Bogalusa, Louisiana, Deacons were observed carrying walkie-talkies.

Los Angeles letter and LHM of 8/15/65 sets forth information from a source that "...a member of the Los Angeles Local-Socialist Workers Party (LAL-SWP)..., stated that James Garrett had told him that the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) is outfitting a secret Negro army under the guise of self-defense." According to the source, donations to SNCC are possibly being used to purchase walkie-talkies and weapons for the Negro organization. (X)(U)

The reference in relet to the "secret Negro army" formed for "self-defense" may be an allusion to the Deacons. Accordingly, Los Angeles should promptly direct its investigative efforts to verifying the accuracy of the information furnished by its source relative to possible SNCC or SWP backing the (X)(U)

1 - Atlanta
1 - New Orleans (157-3290) (Enclosures - 2)

JLM:bp
(8)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE.

157-2466-34

19 AUG 16 1965

CONFIDENTIAL

MAILED 6
AUG 16 1965
COMM-FBI

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

74 AUG 18 1965

MAIL ROOM ☑ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

CONFIDENTIAL

Deacons. Identify the sources of any donations the purposes of which may be the procurement of weapons and walkie-talkies for the Deacons. In view of Sims' visit to Los Angeles, it should be resolved as to whether he contacted SNCC or SWP personnel or solicited their assistance. Furnish any information to the Bureau under the above caption in a form suitable for dissemination with copies to New Orleans, origin. (X)(U)

CONFIDENTIAL

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

FBI

Date: 8/9/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (157-2466)

FROM: SAC, SAN ANTONIO (157-NEW) (P)

RE: THE COMMITTEE TO AID THE DEACONS
RACIAL MATTERS
DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE

In the August 8, 1965, issue of the San Antonio Light, daily, San Antonio, Texas, newspaper an article appeared stating that MARK KLEIN, a Cornell University student is responsible for the formation of captioned grop in Austin, Texas, the purpose of which is to aid the "Deacons for Defense and Justice." KLEIN described the "Deacons" as "an armed Negro self-defense group." Information also developed that KLEIN also is known in the Baltimore area.

Information developed by SA GEORGE W. H. CARLSON at Austin reflects KLEIN plans to remain in Austin until November 1965.

LEADS

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-12-80 BY SP1 [illegible]

ALBANY

AT ALBANY, NEW YORK

Will check records at Cornell University regarding MARK KLEIN for background information. Also advise San Antonio Division any information of value regarding subject available in files of Albany Division.

3 - Bureau
2 - Albany
2 - Baltimore
3 - San Antonio (157-NEW)
(1 - 157-310)
JJC / jb
(10)

REC-54 157-2466-35

MCT-45

14 AUG 11 1965

Approved _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

57 AUG 19 1965

INV. SEC.

SA 157-NEW

BALTIMORE

AT BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Will advise San Antonio any information available regarding the background of KLEIN.

SAC, San Antonio

8/16/65

1 - Mr. Martin

Director, FBI (157-2466)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-17-80 BY SP1 8ce/ff

DEACONS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
RACIAL MATTERS

ReSAairtel 8/9/65 captioned "The Committee to Aid the Deacons," with copies to Albany and Baltimore; Buairtel to New Orleans 7/19/65.

Enclosed for New Orleans is a Xerox copy of referenced San Antonio airtel.

Enclosed for San Antonio, Baltimore and Albany is a Xerox copy of referenced Bureau airtel 7/19/65 and a Xerox copy of a "Wall Street Journal" article 7/12/65 concerning captioned organization.

San Antonio should promptly submit letterhead memorandum (LHM), with copies to New Orleans, regarding attempts to form a committee to aid the Deacons of Defense and Justice in Austin, Texas, as set forth in reairtel 8/9/65. Local dissemination should be made to Secret Service and the military intelligence.

Upon receipt of background data concerning Mark Klein and further information regarding attempts to organize the Deacons in Austin, Texas, San Antonio should consider interviewing Klein. A search of Bureau indices will be made upon receipt of identifying data on Mark Klein.

Enclosures (2)

EX-100

REC 27 157-2466-36

2 - Albany - Enclosures (2)
2 - Baltimore - Enclosures (2)
2 - New Orleans (157-3290) - Enclosure

NOTE:

19 AUG 16 1965

San Antonio has furnished information concerning attempts, by Mark Klein of Cornell University, to organize a chapter of the Deacons of Defense and Justice in Austin, Texas.

The Deacons is an all-Negro organization formed in Louisiana as protection against Klan violence. Leads are outstanding at Baltimore and Albany to check Klein's background.

JLM: deh (10)

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

55 AUG 19 1965

MAILED 8
AUG 13 1965
COMM-FBI

August 13, 1965

REC 1 157-2466-37

EX 105

Honorable John Stennis
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 7-17-80 BY SP1 gal/fu

My dear Senator:

I received your letter of August 11th enclosing a communication from State Representative Sutton Marks concerning the Deacons for Defense and Justice.

While I certainly would like to be of service to Mr. Marks, information contained in the files of the FBI must be maintained as confidential in accordance with regulations of the Department of Justice. He may be assured, however, that the FBI is ever aware of its responsibilities in the internal security and civil rights fields, and whenever a violation of a law within our jurisdiction occurs, we will make every effort to continue to discharge our obligations with the highest degree of thoroughness, dispatch and objectivity.

In response to your request, I am returning the material you forwarded.

Sincerely yours,
J. Edgar Hoover

MAILED 2
AUG 13 1965
COMM-FBI

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
DeLoach
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

Enclosures (2)
1 - New Orleans - Enclosures (2)
1 - Jackson - Enclosures (2)
(see note next page)
DTP:rsp (6)

AUG 24 1965

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

AUG 13 3 57 PM '65
FBI
RECORD-READING ROOM

Honorable John Stennis

NOTE: Senator Stennis is on the Special Correspondents' List. Marks is not identifiable in Bufiles. The New Orleans Office is conducting a current investigation regarding Deacons for Defense and Justice to determine its activities and leadership. It is a Negro group formed in Louisiana with one Ernest Thomas as apparently its spokesman. He has advised Negroes that they should arm themselves and form roving patrols which will assist Negroes when being arrested. Fees and dues of the group are used to purchase ammunition, radio equipment and literature.

RICHARD B. RUSSELL, GA., CHAIRMAN
JOHN STENNIS, MISS.
HARRY FLOOD BYRD, VA.
STUART SYMINGTON, MO.
HENRY M. JACKSON, WASH.
SAM J. ERVIN, JR., N.C.
STROM THURMOND, S.C.
CLAIR ENGLE, CALIF.
HOWARD W. CANNON, NEV.
ROBERT C. BYRD, W. VA.
STEPHEN M. YOUNG, OHIO
DANIEL K. INOUYE, HAWAII

LEVERETT SALTONSTALL, MASS.
MARGARET CHASE SMITH, MAINE
J. GLENN BEALL, MD.
BARRY GOLDWATER, ARIZ.
CLIFFORD P. CASE, N.J.

HARRY L. WINGATE, JR., CHIEF CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

August 11, 1965

Honorable J. Edgar Hoover
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Hoover:

It will be greatly appreciated if you will give your careful study and attention to the enclosed and let me have a full report in duplicate.

Kindly return the enclosure with your reply.

Sincerely yours,

John Stennis

John Stennis
United States Senator

JS:b
Enclosure
Letter and enclosure of
Honorable Sutton Marks
Jackson, Mississippi

REC 1 157-2466-37
EX 105 5 AUG 18 1965

AUG 12 1965
FBI - DOC

2 ENCLOSURE

ACK 8-13-65
DTP:rsp
3 xerox 8-13-65
original encs returned.

CORRESPONDENCE

SUTTON MARKS
HINDS COUNTY
BOX 1757
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

MISSISSIPPI
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
JACKSON

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
MANUFACTURES, CHAIRMAN
APPROPRIATIONS
BANKS AND BANKING
MILITARY AFFAIRS
PENSIONS AND SOCIAL WELFARE

August 2, 1965

WASHINGTON OFFICE
RECEIVED
AUG 6 1965
RECEIVED
JOHN STENNIS

Honorable John Stennis
Senator, State of Mississippi
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Stennis:

During the past several weeks in many national publications an organization known as the Deacons for Defense and Justice has received quite a bit of publicity. In both a recent issue of LIFE Magazine and NEWSWEEK, there have been references to the use of automatic weapons, grenades and mortars. I believe that such weapons in the hands of ordinary citizens without a proper licensing of the individual and the weapon is illegal. My question to you is: can you find out from the FBI if they are aware of these statements and if all of this has been checked out to the letter of the law?

You have certainly been getting good publicity in these parts and I think that the whole nation is most appreciative of your fine efforts. The next time you are home we certainly hope that we will have the opportunity of visiting with you.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Sutton

Sutton Marks

SM:pw

Information

ENCLOSURE

157-2466

DECLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY DERIVED FROM:
FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE
DATE 08-20-2018 BY: [redacted]

SECRET (U)

b6
b7C

Record from Morse Allen, CIA 7/27/65 WOB

21 July 1965

Deacons of Defense And Justice

In connection with another matter, a source of this office talked to Mr. Jay Richard KENNEDY at his residence, New York City, on 13 July 1965. (Various topics were covered during the interview and have been reported under separate memoranda.) Following are Mr. KENNEDY's comments (not verbatim) concerning James FARMER of CORE which Mr. KENNEDY indicated should be forwarded in part to the President. In this connection, it should be noted that the source made it specifically clear to Mr. KENNEDY that he had no access to the White House, or any channel to the White House, but that he would report Mr. KENNEDY's comments in his usual channel into his own particular office within the Agency.

Mr. KENNEDY pointed out that James FARMER, who is head of CORE, is the number one target of the Maoist Communists and that by target Mr. KENNEDY specifically meant that FARMER either had to be assassinated or "engulfed" and taken over by the Peking-line Communists. Mr. KENNEDY stated that this was obvious since FARMER is the only known non-violence advocate who is an outstanding anti-Communist and the foremost negro leader who commands a national following. Mr. KENNEDY stated Martin Luther KING has already shown his hand by attacking the Administration and advocating a pull-out in Vietnam (KENNEDY insists that KING is compromised by his moral background and is probably controlled by Peking-line Communists); A. Phillip RANDOLPH is out of the United States and is very inactive; Harry BELAFONTE, of course, is a Communist and undoubtedly Peking controlled; and Whitney YOUNG and Roy WILKINS have no popular grass-roots type of following.

Mr. KENNEDY stated that the effort to "get" FARMER was obvious in the recent CORE convention at Durham, North Carolina, where efforts were made to remove FARMER as head of CORE and where the convention had adopted an anti-Administration "pull-out of Vietnam" line. Mr. KENNEDY stated obviously this was Peking-line inspired and the remarkable about-face that FARMER forced on the convention not only showed FARMER's control and courage, but very clearly targeted him to the Peking-line Communists. Mr. KENNEDY pointed out it must be remembered that while the convention was going on, Martin Luther KING issued a public statement denouncing U. S. policy and advocating pulling out of Vietnam.

REC-22 157-2466-38

Further, Mr. KENNEDY commented that FARMER's wife, Lulu, who is a white woman, had called Mr. KENNEDY from Durham and that Mr. KENNEDY had, in addition to offering advice, offered to come to Durham at that time. Mr. KENNEDY commented he cannot state the exact effect his talk with Mrs. FARMER had (which is apparently unknown to James FARMER), but it was obvious that FARMER's reversing the CORE convention stand followed in the wake of this telephone call. Further, according to Mr. KENNEDY, FARMER, immediately upon arriving in New York from Durham, called Mr. KENNEDY.

NOT RECORDED

ORIGINAL FILED IN

SECRET (U)

File 100-401300, cc-100-447459-925, cc-157-2466

53 SEP 2 1965

AUG 18 1965
Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

Subsequently, according to Mr. KENNEDY, he has talked with FARMER both before his trip to Bogalusa, Louisiana, and after his return. Mr. KENNEDY stated that he had asked FARMER about the situation in Louisiana and FARMER had explained his views in the following manner which is the basis for the KENNEDY recommendation of passing the information to the White House. FARMER stated that his problem in Bogalusa and also in other places in the South is the fact that the poor negro families, most of whom reside in isolated areas of country surrounding the towns, are subject to terror and intimidation by bands of white extremists who threaten and actually commit bodily harm on these negro people. Furthermore, these people have no means of transportation and to try to get them to come into town to register as voters, facing the difficulties of intimidation and lack of transportation, is a major problem. According to FARMER, there has been no help for these people until the advent of the so-called Deacons and that the Deacons have offered assistance and more importantly physical protection. FARMER stated that when these people turned to him and asked "What can we do?", FARMER had no real answer. According to Mr. KENNEDY, he asked FARMER why didn't he appeal to the President personally since FARMER does have access to the White House, and FARMER stated that he could not do this now. Mr. KENNEDY asked him why he could not and FARMER explained that if he publicly appealed to the President after forcing the CORE convention to reverse its stand on Vietnam, it would look like a "deal" and that he, FARMER, could be discredited because of this. Mr. KENNEDY asked FARMER what type of appeal should be made to the White House and FARMER, in substance, replied that if the White House were to send in either federal troops or federal marshals to protect the negro voters then he, FARMER, could handle the Deacons. Mr. KENNEDY asked FARMER if he knew the leadership of the Deacons and named Ernest THOMAS and "Val" SIMS. FARMER stated, of course, he knew both of these individuals and when asked by Mr. KENNEDY about how many Deacons there were, FARMER stated that all told they had estimated about 10,000. Mr. KENNEDY then said how could you handle the Deacons assuming that you had federal troops or marshals to help. According to Mr. KENNEDY, FARMER stated that he would tell the Deacons and their leaders to "cool it" and "they would cool it." Mr. KENNEDY insisted that FARMER is extremely positive on this point.

According to Mr. KENNEDY, FARMER is somewhat naive politically and although Mr. KENNEDY has tried to explain to him the Maoist tactics, FARMER does not as yet fully comprehend them. Mr. KENNEDY stated it is perfectly obvious that behind the Deacons is a strong organization force of hard core Peking-line Communists. Mr. KENNEDY further stated that the Communists are provoking violence and also quite obviously they are provoking violence in an area where CORE is active. Also it was clearly apparent that they worked against FARMER at the national CORE convention at Durham, North Carolina.

Mr. KENNEDY stated that there is a facade of legitimate, harassed negroes who are honestly trying to protect other negroes (and themselves) by defending them by physical means and that these negroes are being duped and pushed into violence by the Communists. They, of course, do not understand this. Mr. KENNEDY further said that FARMER, himself, does not directly understand although he may have learned a rude lesson at the Durham, North Carolina, convention where he was nearly kicked out of his leadership. In addition, Mr. KENNEDY stated that if the negroes got federal support and FARMER stopped the Deacons movement, this would leave the hard core Communists behind the Deacons exposed and vulnerable.

Mr. KENNEDY stated that it is his intention to meet with FARMER as soon as possible and go over again with him the matter of the Deacons and the left-wing political maneuvers behind the Deacons.

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

FBI

Date: 8/17/65

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL _____
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, BALTIMORE (157-New)

SUBJECT: THE COMMITTEE TO AID THE DEACONS
RM

Re SA airtel, dated 8/9/65.

Baltimore indices are negative on MARK KLEIN.

3 - Bureau
2 - San Antonio
1 - Baltimore
MEG:ers
(6)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-17-80 BY SP1 gal/lr

REC 45 157-2466-39

EX-103

14 AUG 18 1965

ICC 808 203

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

53 AUG 24 1965

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

DECLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY DERIVED FROM:
FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE
DATE 08-31-2018 BY: [redacted]

b6
b7C

FBI

Date: 8/12/65

CONFIDENTIAL (U)

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL _____
(Priority)

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Walters
Miss Gandy

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP1 8M/fa 7-17-81
REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2, 4, 2
DATE OF REVIEW 8-12-85

FROM: SAC, DETROIT (157-new) (P)

APPEARANCE OF ROBERT HICKS,
VICE-PRESIDENT, BOGALUSA (LA.)
DEACONS FOR DEFENSE AND JUSTICE
SPONSORED BY GROUP ON ADVANCED
LEADERSHIP (GOAL), 8/22/65,
DETROIT, MICH.
RACIAL MATTERS

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight copies of a letterhead memorandum. Two copies of the LHM are being furnished the New Orleans Office.

One copy of LHM being furnished G-2 and two copies being furnished U.S. Secret Service, both Detroit, Mich.

Source #1 utilized in LHM is [redacted] b7D
Confidential Source - Racial. Source #2 is [redacted] (U)

This matter will be followed and further letterhead memoranda submitted after appearance of HICKS.

ENCLOSURE

REC- 32 40

EX 109

10 AUG 19 1965

3 - Bureau (Enc. 8) (Rm)
2 - New Orleans (Enc. 2) (Rm)
4 - Detroit
1 - 157-706 (POSSIBLE RACIAL VIOLENCE)
1 - [redacted]
1 - [redacted] (U)

b3
b7D
b7E

TPD:sal
(9)

AGENCY: ACSI, ONI, OSI, SEC. SERV.
DEPT: ISD, CRD, [redacted]
DATE FORW: 8/16/65
HOW FORW: 1215
BY: Thim:cl

1cc & cc LHM
808 RB

C. C. Wick

UNRECORDED COPY FILED IN

AUG 20 1965
XEROX

CONFIDENTIAL (U)

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (U)

Detroit PD and the Michigan State Police are aware of the contents in the LHM.

The LHM is being classified "~~Confidential~~" inasmuch as information furnished by sources could reasonably result in the identification of confidential informants of continuing value and compromise effectiveness thereof.

~~[illegible]~~ (U)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (U)

DECLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY DERIVED FROM:
FBI AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION GUIDE
DATE 08-24-2018 BY: [redacted]

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CONFIDENTIAL (U)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

Detroit, Michigan
August 12, 1965

Re: Appearance of Robert Hicks, Vice-President, Bogalusa (Louisiana) Deacons for Defense and Justice Sponsored by Group on Advanced Leadership (GOAL), August 22, 1965, Detroit, Michigan

On August 11, 1965, source #1, who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised that Robert Hicks, Vice-President of the Bogalusa (Louisiana) Deacons for Defense and Justice, will speak at Detroit, Michigan, on Sunday, August 22, 1965, at a freedom dinner sponsored by GOAL. According to this source, the Deacons for Defense and Justice is a rifle club which was recently organized in the Bogalusa, Louisiana, area, the membership of which is composed entirely of Negroes and the purpose of which is to protect civil rights workers in that area. (U)

Source #1 advised that the purpose of the affair is to raise funds and to honor Mr. Hicks, the funds raised allegedly to be utilized by Mr. Hicks and the Bogalusa Voters League in connection with their activities in Louisiana. (U)

The GOAL was filed as a non-profit corporation with the Michigan Corporation and Securities Commission on April 19, 1962, with Certificate Number 112493. The purpose or purposes for which the corporation was formed are as follows:

1. To promote the educational, social and economic interests of the total community.

2. To purchase, own, hold, rent, lease, mortgage, sell, convey and otherwise lawfully acquire, hold and dispose of real and personal property or any interest therein, as may be necessary or convenient to carry into effect the objects of this corporation.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP1 Bal/kr 7-17-80
REASON - FCIM 11, 1-2. 4.2 D
DATE OF REVIEW 8-12-85

AUG 20 1965 XEROX

CONFIDENTIAL (U)

GROUP 1
~~Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification~~

ENCLOSURE

157-2466-40

Re: Appearance of Robert Hicks,
Sponsored by GOAL, 8/22/65

3. To solicit, sell or give memberships.

4. To solicit and/or receive donations and gifts.

RICHARD BULLOCK HENRY, President, was shown as the first Resident Agent. The corporation, at the time of incorporation, owned no real estate but claimed to have $1,000.00 in cash.

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On August 11, 1965, source #2, who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised that in March, 1965, Richard Henry stated that because of financial difficulties the GOAL office was being closed. Source further advised that GOAL is not functioning as an organization at this time and that Richard Henry is merely utilizing the name of GOAL in order to indicate that the freedom dinner is being sponsored by a local civil rights organization when, in fact, such is not the case. (U)

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